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# A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF TEACHER DECISIONS IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

by

© DAVID JEFFARES

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled *A Descriptive Study of Teacher Decisions in Curriculum Development* submitted by David Jeffares in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Elementary Education.

Naomi Iverson
Supervisor

Edna L. Cross

Daisy Sawada

Jack McConvey

A. Tribes

K. May
External Examiner

Date 29 June 1973.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the role of the classroom teacher in the curriculum decision making process. Three specific problems were considered: (1) What elements influence teachers' curricular decisions? (2) What do teachers think about prescribed curricula and related decision making responsibilities? (3) What relationships exist between a teacher's belief system and various components of the curricular decision making process?

Data were collected by administering the *This I Believe Test* and a three-part opinionnaire, and by analyzing respondents' curricular plans. The sample consisted of 21 randomly selected teachers of upper elementary social studies in large-city, small-city, and rural school jurisdictions. Data were tabulated and analyzed descriptively.

Influences on teacher curricular decisions were ranked by teachers as follows: (1) instructional resources, (2) curriculum elements, (3) student characteristics, (4) teacher characteristics, (5) instructional procedures, and (6) evaluation.

Teachers reported that the broad goals stated in the social studies curriculum handbook had caused them to modify their curricular decision making practices.

Identifying children's needs and subsequent selection of appropriate needs-based objectives were perceived as curricular tasks of considerable importance.

The findings indicate the possibility that a relationship may

exist among the belief systems of teachers, their perceptions of the curricular decision making process, and the content in the curricular plans which emerge from that process.

Content analysis of teacher curricular plans revealed that cognitive, affective, valuing, and design components were all present, but that the cognitive aspects received greatest emphasis.

Limited conclusions were drawn in terms of the sample. When teachers consciously assume the role of curricular decision maker, the availability of appropriate instructional resources appears to influence their curricular decisions to the greatest extent. However, other influential elements may take precedence during the different stages of preparing curricular plans.

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# Chapter 1

## THE PROBLEM

### *Introduction*

The emphasis in curriculum development has shifted from the provision of specified teacher guidelines to broad goal statements which teachers are expected to translate into instruction that meets students' needs, interests, and capabilities. Support for the decision making role of classroom teachers is found among the writers in the field of curriculum. According to Frymier and Hawn (1970), "The teacher is the most powerful factor in the whole education process (p. 191)." This concept has also been supported by Cay (1966): "The teacher . . . is the focal point of any curriculum (p. 56)." The responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating curricular activities in the best interests of children is considered to be a primary facet of the teaching process (Beauchamp, 1966, 1968; Campbell, 1952; Leese and others, 1961; Neagley, 1967).

Although much opinion has been expressed about the classroom teacher's role in curriculum development, there is little evidence from research related to curricular decision making. When responsibility for the final choice in student learnings rests with the classroom teacher, Connelly (1972) suggests that:

> Without an adequate understanding of how teachers make curriculum choices and without adequate mechanisms for educating teachers in their roles as choice makers, it is irresponsible romanticism to delegate curriculum development authority to teachers [p. 170].

Although isolated attempts have been made to investigate elements of the teacher's role in curriculum development (Grobman, 1972; Payne, 1969; Taylor, 1970), there is a need for coordinated, on-going research which would create an effective relationship between theoretical and practical aspects of curriculum development. According to Connelly (1971)

> . . . [curriculum] development is a form of practical enquiry and requires a kind of research which emphasizes the correspondence between ongoing developments and subsequent ongoing classroom practice. Adequate curriculum development conceptions will be characterized by organic relations between development, school curriculum practices, and research in both [p. 173].

*Background of the Study*

A fundamental informational need of curriculum researchers, developers, implementers and evaluators is a formative picture of the curricular decision making practices of classroom teachers. That teachers are responsible for the learning experiences of children does not preclude the need to know how those experiences transpire. Not only would a clear indication of teachers' curricular decisions result in a profile of "what is;" such information would also serve as a basis for adequate translation of curriculum theory into curricular practice. Taba (1962) has stated that "Teachers are expected to make decisions which require theoretical insights into curriculum . . . (p. 452)." The accumulation of practical data would allow curriculum theorists and researchers to assess curricular practices in terms of effectively meeting the practical, as well as theoretical, needs of teachers.

Beauchamp (1968) has indicated that a curriculum ". . . should be so designed that teachers can and will use it as a point of departure for developing their teaching strategies (p. 102)." This assertion is substantiated by one of the characteristics of the elementary social studies curriculum which was authorized for use in Alberta schools in September, 1971. According to the elementary social studies handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making* (1971),

> The curriculum allows for decisions to be made by those who will be affected by them. The objectives and content prescribed by the Department of Education are stated in the very broadest of terms. Within this broad framework, called the master curriculum, teachers and students can practice responsible decision making planning together learning experiences which are significant to their own lives [p. 5].

Delaney (1962) has asserted that preplanning units of work permits the establishment of clear goals, the securing of materials, and the use of varied instructional resources and strategies. This kind of preplanning is assumed for the implementation of a curriculum such as *Experiences in Decision Making* which is based upon broad goals. According to *Experiences in Decision Making* (1971), "The task of translating the master curriculum into effective learning opportunities is the responsibility of educators at the local level (p. 21)." According to Cay (1966), "To plan an attack and implement it is the role of the classroom teacher (p. 67)."

Much controversy surrounds the concept of curriculum planning. Some writers express concern about the extent to which teachers may be expected to assume responsibility for designing their own curricula. McNeil (1965) has suggested that

> . . . not all teachers are able to prepare effective plans for instruction. . . . Because teachers differ in this ability, it has been necessary to remove the intellectual responsibility for curriculum development from some teachers and place it in the hands of experts [p. 93].

Miklos, Bourgette, and Cowley (1972) have argued that "most teachers do not have the time or the inclination to design their own courses and [consequently] tend to follow the Curriculum Guides (p. 138)."

Although Anderson and Emig (1970) have alluded to the need for planning in their recommendations to the Commission on Educational Planning, they present yet another view,

> Approaching curriculum through [the Tylerian] model locks one into a questionable metaphor about what learning is--a form of benign cognitive engineering--as well as into a language system whose highly specific lexicon and syntax may well determine both the questions that can be asked and the answers that can be found [p. 4].

In whatever vein educators may wish to view planning, the phenomenon is recognized in some particular context and to some degree by those individuals who are responsible for the learning experiences of students. In this connection, Doll (1970) has suggested that,

> . . . classroom teachers largely determine the curriculum, . . . when the classroom door is closed, the insight and skill of the teacher determine in largest measure the quality of learners' experiences [p. 224].

Little has been recorded about the elements which influence the process whereby teachers determine learning experiences for children. There is sparse evidence of teachers' views of curricular decision making and the effects that differing beliefs, personalities, and expertise may have upon the plans which teachers develop.

Payne (1969) has written that

> A study of [curricular plans] affords one means by which a school system can determine exactly what it is trying to accomplish through its [curricular] planning activities [p. 3].

The analysis of curricular plans used by teachers in the process of instruction is but one measure of the total curricular planning process of teachers. How plans are developed, and the forces which influence that development, are legitimate curriculum queries to be raised.

*Statement of the Problem*

There is a lack of information about the teacher's role in curriculum development at the classroom level. Descriptive information is required before a conceptual model of the teacher curricular decision making process can be described and tested. A suitable methodology is needed for the treatment of descriptive data on which the development of a curricular decision making model can be based.

*Research Problems*

*1.0 Influences upon curricular decisions.* The first research problem was the discovery of elements which influence teachers when they are involved in the curricular decision making process.

1.1 What degree of influence do teachers attribute to such elements as the learner, the school, and the authorized provincial curriculum handbook when they attempt to develop curricular plans?

1.2 What elements do teachers perceive as the most important influences upon their curricular decisions?

1.3 What relationship exists between the importance ascribed by teachers to the elements described in the literature and the elements they identified themselves?

*2.0 Components of the curricular decision making process.* The second research problem involved the assessment of teachers' opinions about a provincially authorized curriculum and planning procedures which result in curricular plans.

2.1 What effect has a broadly-stated curriculum such as *Experiences in Decision Making* had upon teachers' curricular decision making?

2.2 Of what importance are specific curricular tasks to teachers?

2.3 What are the content constituents of teachers' curricular plans?

*3.0 Influence of belief systems upon teachers' curricular decisions.* The third research problem was an inquiry into possible relationships between the belief system of a teacher and various components of the curricular decision making process.

3.1 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief system of a teacher and that teacher's view of the curricular decision making process?

3.2 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief system of a teacher and the elements which teachers perceive to influence their curricular decisions?

3.3 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief systems of teachers and the content in the curricular plans used by those teachers for instructional purposes?

*Assumptions Underlying the Study*

The study was founded upon three assumptions:

(1) The classroom teacher in Alberta is professionally responsible for the curricular decision making associated with curriculum development at the classroom level.

(2) The classroom teacher enters an instructional activity with some form of curriculum plan which he intends to implement.

(3) The classroom teacher who uses the elementary social studies curriculum, *Experiences in Decision Making*, as the basis of social studies activity must create or adopt a curriculum prior to instruction.

*Conceptual Framework of the Study*

Elementary teachers in Alberta have recently been assigned the professional responsibility for ". . . developing the intermediate objectives and determining the experiences which will promote the broad goals (*Curriculum Development for Classroom Teachers*, p. 7)." According to the elementary social studies handbook authorized for use in the Province of Alberta, "the task of translating the master curriculum [curriculum documentation] into effective learning opportunities is the responsibility of educators at the local level (*Experiences in Decision Making*, 1971, p. 21)." Teachers are now responsible for two important

activities in the curriculum decision making process: the delineation of broad generalizations, and the specification of appropriate objectives. *Experiences in Decision Making* (1971), the master curriculum which serves as a point of departure for these activities, is the authorized social studies handbook for the Province of Alberta. Teachers are expected to adapt this curriculum to suit the specific needs of particular learners.

The process of curricular decision making makes several demands upon teachers. According to the Alberta social studies handbook for elementary schools, specific children's needs should be determined before appropriate sectors of the curriculum can be selected for planning purposes. In addition to the needs and interests of children and the global objectives in the curriculum document selected by the teacher, specificity should be given to the objectives which are chosen for translation into a curricular plan. Elsewhere, Taylor (1970) found evidence that the interests and attitudes of pupils are important elements in the process of planning which serve to direct teachers' attention to the pupils for whom curricular plans are developed. It may be that the characteristics are not the only factors or the most important factors which determine the nature of teachers' curricular plans. The personal and professional characteristics of the individual might also constitute important dimensions of influence on the curriculum decison making processes employed by a teacher.

Another possible set of influences on the teacher's curricular decision making process may arise within the school itself. Doll

(1970), Fraser (1964), and Frymier and Hawn (1970) have suggested that elements associated with the function of individual schools and larger educational units likely play a significant role in the curricular decision making processes followed by teachers.

At least four sets of elements appear to influence teacher's curricular decision making process: the authorized curriculum, the individual characteristics of the learner, the individual characteristics of the teacher, and factors within the school.

In Alberta, curricular decision making by classroom teachers is an extension of curriculum development by committees established by the Department of Education. The committees consist of representative teachers-in-the-field, consultative and supervisory personnel, and university staff who are involved in curriculum studies. The curriculum decision making process is comprised of four specific activities which find support in the work of Doll (1970), Herrick (1971), Komisar (1962), Maguire (1969), Payne (1969), and Ragan and Shepherd (1971). These functions are:

(1) determining the needs of specific children,

(2) interpreting curriculum documentation,

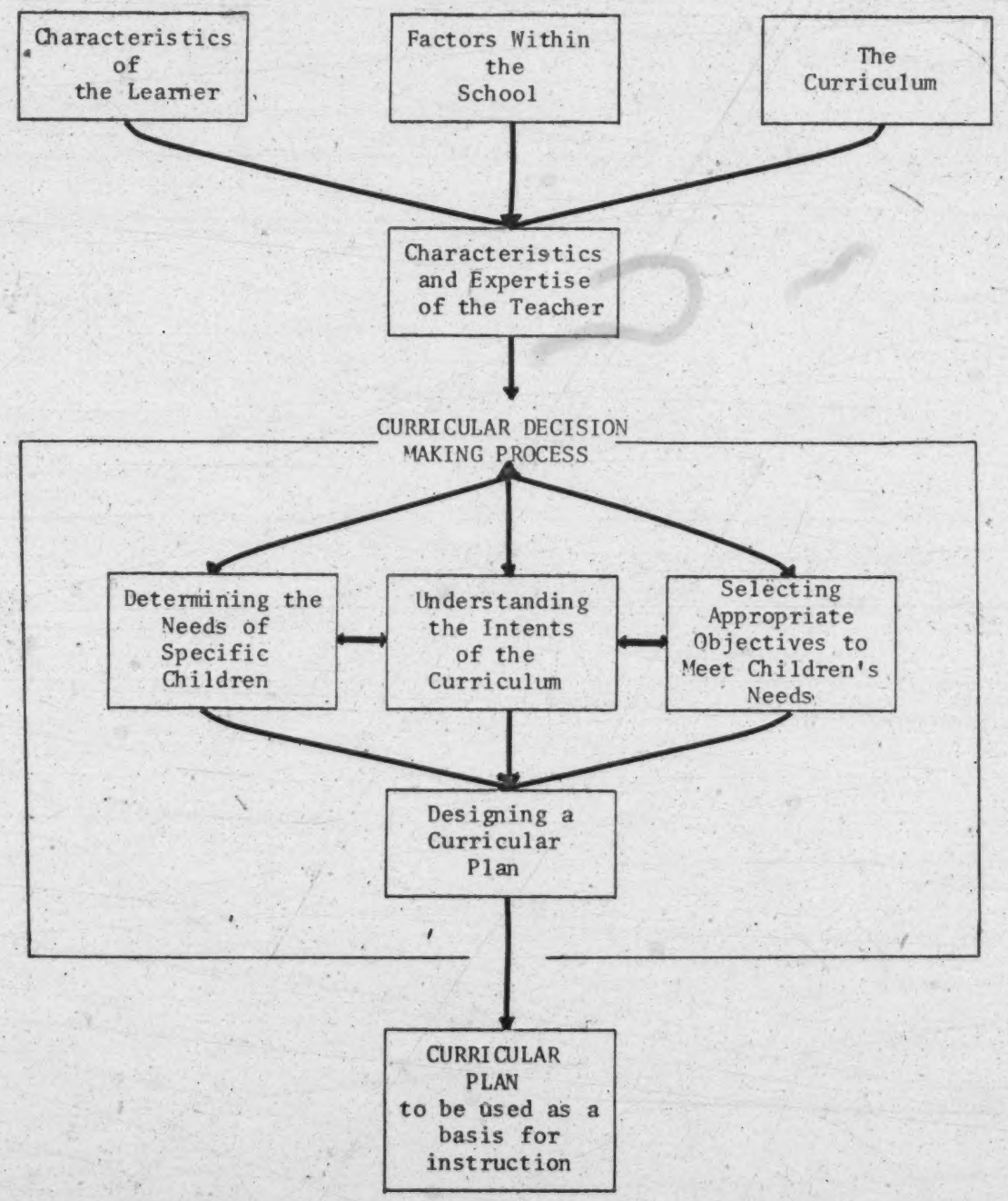
(3) selecting appropriate objectives, and

(4) designing a curricular plan.

The relationship among environmental influences, the learner, the teacher as a curricular decision maker, the general activities associated with the curricular decision making process, and the curricular plan, is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

A Concept of Teacher Curricular Decision Making


Characteristics of the Learner
Factors Within the School
The Curriculum
Characteristics and Expertise of the Teacher
CURRICULAR DECISION MAKING PROCESS
Determining the Needs of Specific Children
Understanding the Intents of the Curriculum
Selecting Appropriate Objectives to Meet Children's Needs
Designing a Curricular Plan
CURRICULAR PLAN to be used as a basis for instruction

*Importance of the Study*

Although the function of curricular decision making is by no means new to the classroom teacher, the current emphasis upon the process has thrust attention and considerable pressure upon classroom teachers. According to Leese and others (1961), ". . . curriculum making is an important art of teaching (p. 463)." Curricular decision making may be an expectation of every classroom teacher but little is known about the elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions, teachers' knowledge of curricular decision making processes, or the curricular plans which teachers use as the basis for instruction.

Data about these elements could serve as the basis of further research into the concept of curricular decision making and relevant programs designed to assist teachers in making curricular decisions.

*Definitions*

Three of the terms which recur throughout this report are defined as follows:

*Curriculum.* This term refers to a document such as *Experiences in Decision Making* (1971), the elementary social studies handbook which has been authorized for use in Alberta schools by the Department of Education. A curriculum consists of a set of broad intents which teachers are expected to translate into curricular plans.

A curriculum can serve as a point of departure in curricular decision making.

*Curricular decision making.* This term refers to the planning procedures undertaken by individual teachers in order to prepare curricular plans for specific children in particular instructional settings.

*Curricular plan.* This term refers to the statement of specific objectives a teacher develops from a set of broad intents selected from a curriculum for instructional purposes. A curricular plan may designate content which supports specificed objectives; the plan may also indicate particular objectives selected according to the needs and interests of individual children. The curricular plan is a link between a curriculum and instruction.

*Scope of the Study*

The study was designed to identify the elements which influenced the curricular decisions of 21 elementary teachers. The teachers were asked to rank the perceived importance of certain curricular decision making processes. An attempt was made to analyze the content of curricular plans submitted for scrutiny by the teachers in the sample. Finally, the belief pattern of each teacher in the sample was described in an attempt to discover possible relationships between teachers' belief systems and their curricular decisions and attitudes.

No inferential statistics were employed. Generalizations cannot be made from data representative of the sample only. Implications and conclusions from this exploratory study are intended to serve as a source of recommendations for further conceptualization and research.

*Limitations*

(1) Respondents to the questionnaire may misinterpret some of the questions or supply observations which do not reflect accurate impressions.

(2) A five-point equal-interval scale used to determine the degree of importance ascribed to specific curricular decisions and elements which influence the curricular decision making process may not include conditions matching the respondents' perceptions.

(3) Each set of five statements related to the elementary social studies handbook may not include conditions which correspond to the perceptions of the respondents.

(4) Judges may assign elements of influence into categories which do not reflect the actual perceptions of the teachers who generate the elements.

(5) Curricular plans may not fully represent the respondents' perceptions of the curricular decision making process even though teachers use the plans as bases for instruction in elementary social studies.

(6) Some of the intended meaning may be lost from the curricular plans when the texts are prepared for content analysis. Content units resulting from the computerized content analysis program, *Alphabetic Sort and Frequency Count*, may be assigned to descriptor categories which do not reflect the exact contexts from which the content units are taken.

(7) Subgrouping of the sample on the basis of teachers' belief systems is limited by the particular distribution of the four belief systems according to *TIB* scores compiled by the readers.

(8) The sample is drawn from a small population of upper elementary teachers who are users of the social studies handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*.

(9) Generalizations are limited to teachers who are expected to translate broadly stated curriculum goals into curricular plans.

*Delimitations*

(1) The sample is restricted to 21 teachers of fourth, fifth, or sixth grade elementary social studies equally represented by one large-city, one small-city, and one rural school jurisdiction in the Province of Alberta.

(2) Respondents are users of *Experiences in Decision Making* as a basis of instruction and develop their curricular and instructional plans individually.

(3) The study is concerned with curricular intents and elements associated with the preactive or planning stage in curriculum development and implementation. Instructional strategies and evaluative procedures associated with the implementation of curricular plans are not the concerns of the study.

(4) Components of the curricular decision making process and the postulated elements which influence curricular decisions are not all-inclusive.

(5) Content analysis is conducted on curricular plans which are accepted in either written or verbal form. These plans are in current use by the teachers who provide them.

(6) Criterion levels for evaluating observations and for establishing acceptable limits in two categorization tasks are set by the investigator.

(7) The influence of the community as an influence upon teachers' curricular decisions is embodied in the jurisdictions from which the sample subgroups are drawn.

*Organization of the Study*

In the first chapter the problem has been outlined. In the second chapter, a brief review of research related to the research questions will be discussed. The research design will be described in the third chapter followed by an account of the conduct of the study in Chapter 4. Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 will report the analyses of the data obtained about the sample, the influences on teachers' curricular decisions, teacher assessment of curricular decision making, and curricular plans respectively. A discussion of the findings will be presented in the ninth chapter. The final chapter of the thesis will consist of a summary of the study, together with conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

## Chapter 2

## RELATED LITERATURE

### *Introduction*

In this chapter, the literature relevant to the problems selected for this study has been reviewed. The first section of the discussion focuses on the concept of curriculum development. The second part of the chapter explores the concepts of curriculum decision making together with the process and design elements of which it is comprised. The third part is devoted to curricular plans. The fourth section of the review examines some elements that influence curricular decisions. The fifth section examines the use of content analysis in curriculum research. The literature on belief systems of teachers is also reviewed in order to assess its relevance to the curricular decision making process. The concluding section of the chapter synthesizes the findings in the literature which are significant to this study.

### *Concept of Curriculum Development*

Curriculum development by Alberta elementary school social studies teachers is affected by the planning and production of a master plan entitled *Experiences in Decision Making*, a handbook authorized for general use in September, 1971. The handbook includes a curriculum based on values and broad goals specified by planners who have interpreted the social milieu of which they are part. Taba (1962)

stated that,

> . . . curriculum development needs to draw upon analyses of society and culture, studies of the learner and the learning process, and analyses of the nature of knowledge in order to determine the purposes of the school and the nature of its curriculum [p. 10].

Friesen and Holdaway (1973) have suggested that curriculum development

> . . . refers to activities which lead to preparation of the statement of the curriculum. Frequently these developmental activities are performed by committees of teachers in conjunction with the department of education staff and outside experts [p. 30].

Kyte (1958) has indicated that "The curriculum consists of the totality of learning experiences essential to the maximum development of the individual as a useful member of a changing democratic society (p. 171)." The scope of such a curriculum lies beyond the range of one teacher's expertise. Friesen and Holdaway (1973) have suggested that curriculum development is the process from which evolves ". . . the overall statement of course content, commonly at the provincial level (p. 30)." The classroom teacher's chief responsibility lies in the translation of this statement into learning activities which have been determined on the bases of student needs and specific instructional circumstances.

*Concept of Curricular Decision Making*

Curricular decision making is part of the process of curriculum development. Whereas a curriculum is the product of curriculum development, the outcome of the curricular decision making process is a curricular plan.

Taba (1968) has outlined the elements which comprise curricular decision making: teachers formulate objectives, select specific subject matter, choose appropriate instructional strategies, and provide for evaluation. Each of these requires that choices among alternatives be made. These curricular decision making functions are similar to the process variables posited by Crosby (1964), Herrick (1965, 1971), and Stansbury and Huenecke (1973).

*Process elements.* Three process elements are contained in the curricular decision making process. They are: interpretation of intents, identification of learner needs, and the selection of appropriate objectives.

*(i) Interpretation of intents.* One of the problems associated with the implementation of any curriculum, especially a newly developed one, is the accurate interpretation of the document by teachers who intend to use it. Ragan and Shepherd (1971) have drawn attention to the teacher's responsibility associated with the understanding, acceptance, and use of a curriculum guide as it was intended by the developers. According to *Experiences in Decision Making* (1971), "The task of translating the master curriculum into effective learning opportunities is the responsibility of educators at the local level (p. 21)." Maguire (1969) has identified the possibility of two conflicts when teachers attempt to translate the goals of a curriculum into specific instructional objectives. There may be a perceptual conflict if the teacher's conception of an objective differs from the

conception of the curriculum developer; as well, there may be a combinational conflict if teachers weight the value dimensions of curriculum goals differently when they are making curricular decisions.

*(ii) Identification of learner needs.* A number of writers have conceptualized this process element. Komisar (1962) has posited two approaches to the identification of learners' needs: prescriptive and motivational. He maintains that prescriptive needs are criterion-referenced. They include objectives to be reached, necessities to be met, deficiencies to be overcome, and rules to be observed. Motivational needs are spontaneously met. They include persistent and recurrent wants which require on-going accommodation and lacks whose persistence would not permit survival. Herrick (1965) emphasizes the importance of identifying learner needs. He asks, "How can I know the child and prepare and manage a classroom environment which will promote his optimum learning (p. 21)?" In a later volume, Herrick (1971) maintains that ". . . the child himself becomes an important agent in determining many of the necessary provisions for his own learning (p. 108)." The identification of learner needs is seen to be a prepre-quisite to the formulation of objectives. Needs should be considered in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor terms.

*(iii) Selection of objectives.* The process of selecting objectives is viewed as a necessary forerunner to effective instruction. Herrick (1965) has addressed the question of selecting objectives in the following manner: "How can I identify, define, and

use my instructional objectives to determine scope, direction, and emphasis of the child's learning experience (p. 21)?" There is general agreement that objectives should be set in terms of children's needs, interests, and abilities; teachers may, however, find it easier to set objectives within the limitations of their own expertise and interests. According to Doll (1970), ". . . when the door is closed, the insight and skill of the teacher determine in largest measure the quality of learners' experiences (p. 224)."

*Design elements.* Once the teacher has considered the process elements in curricular decision making, the task of designing the curricular plan begins. Six elements have been considered.

*(i) Scope.* This element represents the breadth and depth of an instructional activity in terms of learner needs, abilities, and interests. Taba (1962) has cautioned that scope is two-dimensional; the teacher should strive for a balance among wide coverage, depth of understanding, and a high level of conceptualization.

*(ii) Sequence.* Providing continuity of learning activities should be considered in terms of specific learnings and how they relate to the entire curriculum. Hudgins (1971) has placed particular emphasis upon long range and short range benefits in terms of those concepts which require recurrent reinforcement and those which obtain only once. This concept suggests the differences among the developmental characteristics of learners which should be considered by

teachers when they are preparing curricular plans. As well, the concept implies the difference between knowledge which needs reinforcement if it is to be used effectively by the learner and knowledge which is of casual nature--of interest to the learner but not essential in his ability to apply what he has learned to a life situation. When and how to recycle and reintroduce a concept depends upon the teacher's knowledge of the individual.

*(iii) Integration.* This element probably represents the greatest challenge for teachers who are developing curricular plans. The teacher must see ". . . relationships between the learnings in various areas of the curriculum which take place at the same time (Taba, 1962, p. 427)."

*(iv) Instructional resources.* The teacher has the responsibility of locating, selecting, or improvising instructional resources. Availability of materials should not be the chief determinant in deciding what to teach. McNeil (1965) has maintained that responsibility for decisions about materials selection rests with teachers and Anderson (1965) has indicated that, normally, ". . . material is available if it is valued enough to make an effort to obtain it (p. 399)."

*(v) Instructional procedures.* According to Stansbury and Huenecke (1973), "Instructional development deals with strategies and techniques of teaching that attend basically to questions of 'how' (p. 318)." Teachers should strive for alternatives which may be used

in place of a strategy which has not worked in a prior situation.

*(vi) Evaluation.* According to MacKay and Maguire (1971), "Curriculum evaluation . . . refers to the determination of the merit of an instructional program." Gottman and Clasen (1972) share this view of evaluation and further suggest that the merit of an instructional program should be equally considered in the light of processes and outcomes. Schwen (1972) points out that the emphasis of evaluation has shifted away from the measurement of outcomes alone to the appraisal of the processes which lead to the outcomes as well as the outcomes themselves. Credit for this shift in evaluation may be due, in part at least, to Scriven's (1967) distinction between summative and formative evaluation which Herrick (1971) maintains should find equal emphasis in practice.

In summary, writers have suggested at least six elements which comprise a curriculum design: scope, sequence, integration, acquisition of appropriate instructional resources, alternative instructional procedures, and evaluation.

*Curricular Plans*

According to the rationale for *Experiences in Decision Making* (1971), "In planning units and lessons, teachers should translate generalizations into language more appropriate to the level of [their] students (p. 31)." Hudgins (1971), Inlow (1966), and Nerbovig (1970) have suggested that a curricular plan is a collection of objectives and activities based upon alternative events, behavior, priorities,

sequences, and intents. Payne (1969), has derived a detailed description of curricular plans from research conducted under the auspices of the National Research Association. In her view,

> . . . formally approved curriculum plans include detailed descriptions of daily activities and a listing of the materials for instruction . . . and the direction and guidance needed by teachers in carrying out their work [p. 4].

In recognizing the problem of creating a formal planning process which is an effective influence on instructional practices, Payne (1969) has suggested that

> A study of curriculum plans affords one means by which a school system can determine exactly what it is trying to accomplished through its planning activities [p. 3].

Analysis of curricular plans may eventually reveal the degree of congruence between stated curricular intents and those which result from the instructional process.

*Elements Which Influence Curricular Decision Making*

Writers and researchers in curriculum have indicated influences which cluster into four broad categories: learner characteristics, teacher characteristics, conditions within the school, and curriculum.

*Learner characteristics.* In Taylor's (1970) research into teachers' perceptions of the planning process, pupils' interests and attitudes formed one of five categories of indlucences which determined the curricular decisions of the teacher sample. Herrick (1971; 1965) brings further specificity to this category of influence by delineating personal, social, and educational needs as well as children's problems which may serve as major determinants of curricular decisions.

*Teacher characteristics.* Several personal attributes may influence the curricular decisions made by teachers. Psychologists have identified the concreteness and abstractness of teachers' belief systems as determinants of classroom rapport and other researchers have confirmed that the attitudes of teachers towards the curricular decision making process have an effect upon instructional activities and learning outcomes.

Harvey (1970) reported that

> Probably the most crucial determinant of the classroom environment, and thus of the learning conditions surrounding the students, is the behavior of the teacher and the atmosphere she produces. In turn, her behavior, the resulting classroom atmosphere, and the influence she has on her students are all influenced heavily by the nature of her beliefs [pp. 78-79].

Harvey and others (1966) established that System 4 (abstract belief) teachers were more adaptable and flexible on 26 specific dimensions that System 1 (concrete belief) teachers. Factor analysis revealed that System 4 teachers were more resourceful, less dictatorial, and less punitive than System 1 teachers. In another study, Harvey and others (1968) found that students of more abstract teachers, in comparison to their counterparts, were more cooperative, more involved in classroom activities, more active, higher in achievement, more helpful, lower in nurturance seeking, and less concrete in their responses.

Taylor (1970) asked approximately 260 secondary school teachers to rate twelve paired elements for their importance as constituent aspects of the curricular decision making process. From the data, a tentative description of how teachers perceive the process of planning

was developed. Taylor (1970) found that teachers perceive the process as calling for a consideration of those factors which constitute the context of teaching and requiring reference to a range of evaluative criteria which included the interests and attitudes of students towards their units of study.

Chalmers (1972) found that the cognitive and information processing styles of teachers bore some relationship to the achievement levels of students who had undertaken a specific unit in decision making. This research indicates that the belief systems of teachers together with their cognitive and information processing styles may serve as major determinants of the curricular decision making process.

According to *Curriculum Building Procedures in Alberta* (1968) and Fraser (1964), other factors such as professional preparation, experience, and the degree to which professional responsibility is accepted by teachers are postulated as elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions.

*Conditions within the school.* Since curricular decision making takes place at the school level, conditions within the school are likely to influence the process. At least eleven conditions which influence teachers' curricular plans have been identified.

Taylor's (1970) study indicated that evaluative criteria associated with reporting pupil progress and the need for instructional materials affected teachers' perceptions of the planning process. The Alberta Department of Education (1965) has outlined several conditions within the school which influence the conditions under which teachers

make curricular decisions: class enrolment, class composition, instructional facilities, furnishings, and equipment, and time for planning. Herrick (1971; 1965) has posited that spatial arrangements and scheduling procedures influence the flexibility of instructional procedures. According to Taylor (1970), the professional and interactive tone of a school may influence the enthusiasm and exactitude with which teachers prepare instructional plans. Doll (1970) has suggested that

> . . . the successful implementation of any innovative program usually requires a modification of teacher-learner interaction; innovative program implementation is an essential part of ongoing curriculum development [p. 77].

Thier (1971) has indicated that curricular planning, as well as implementation, is influenced by the leadership stemming from pilot projects, innovative schools, and other teachers. Doll (1970) and Conner and Ellena (1967) support this contention by designating outside help, advice, and leadership together with relevant in-service as major determinants of quality in curricular plans.

*Curriculum.* Janzen (1970) has argued that the curriculum of schools is determined by the nature of society since the teacher's use of curriculum guides is a logical consequence of the curriculum developed by representative groups of society. Ragan and Shepherd (1971) have advanced five principles related to teachers' implementation of curricula:

> (1) that teachers base their curricular plans upon sound information about children, the school, and society within the context of a particular curriculum guide;

(2) that the curriculum be used as a resource rather than as a prescription;

(3) that teachers understand, accept and use a curriculum guide as it was intended by its developers;

(4) that teachers be encouraged to make adaptations in terms of individual differences in children; and

(5) that teachers and pupils be free to initiate learning experiences not mentioned in the curriculum document [pp. 161-162].

The foregoing observations are consistent with the philosophy of *Experiences in Decision Making* which assumes that every teacher who uses the program is, by definition, a curriculum decision maker.

*Content Analysis in Curriculum Development*

Herrick (1971) has stated that curriculum documents should be analyzed for what they actually say apart from the unwritten intentions and interpretations of the planner or planning group. He has also delineated two types of analysis for this purpose. Descriptive analysis should describe content and the general nature of the plans without specified and predetermined standards; evaluative analysis would accomplish the same task using predetermined criteria for comparative purposes. Initial research into the content of curriculum documents should involve descriptive analysis whose findings would form the criteria for subsequent evaluative analysis.

*Content analysis as a research technique.* The basic concept of content analysis has changed very little since the technique was first used in the 1930's amd 1940's to determine frequencies of word occurrence in journalism and the content in propaganda.

The general focus of content analysis is upon the "substantive nature of content (Cartwright, in Festinger and Katz, 1953, pp. 424-425)." Runkel and McGrath (1972) define content analysis as ". . . the task of extracting data from natural language obtained either in written or oral form (p. 361)." These more global connotations are but a few of many available in the literature.

Perhaps the most comprehensive, yet classic, definition of content analysis is that of Berelson (in Lindzey, 1954): ". . . a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (p. 489)." To Berelson's definition, Grobman (1972) would add the component "replicability."

Most research projects using content analysis as a research technique employ computer-assisted programs of varying sophistication ranging from simple frequency counts and alphabetizations to highly sophisticated factor analyzed and correlated categorizations elicited from textual materials with no human manipulation at all.

Guttentag (1971) investigated social change in a school by analyzing administrative notices over a period of time. Lucietto (1969) studied the verbal behavior of administrators through an extensive content analysis of the language patterns of school principals. These studies demonstrate the applicability of content analysis in making inferences based upon categorized verbal and written statements.

Zimmer and Cowles (1972) have used FORTRAN IV (a computer language) to analyze counselling sessions in terms of content categorizations which revealed trends and traits in the interviewees. The

technique has implications for all types of interviews. Text can be transferred onto discs in a computing system and subsequently analyzed for 'natural' content by means of a program such as WORDS.

*Implications for research in curriculum.* Several studies have been relevant to curriculum development. Textual analysis such as that described by Grobman (1972) has been done with varying degrees of success. Interjudge reliability and validity problems should soon be eliminated by automatic programs. For example, Iker and Harway (in Gerbner, 1969) report greater accuracy in the analysis of content using WORDS as opposed to inter-judge categorizations based on their analysis of the book, *Wizard of Oz*, for congruency between generated themes and chapter titles. Frey (1972) analyzed process and goal statements as they applied to counselling theories. Dickinson and Rusnell (1971) analyzed a curriculum in adult education and Anderson (1970) conducted a comparative analysis of structure in teacher communicated science content. A final example of a study using content analysis is found in La Duca's (1972) construction of three curriculum models by factor analyzing ten categories of teacher behavior based upon specific courses of study. He found that specific behaviors clustered according to the course of study in question.

This limited sampling of studies in which content analysis was employed as a research tool suggests some interesting implications for research in curriculum development.

If it is assumed that curriculum refers to a body of content, then curriculum should lend itself well to content analysis. Grobman

(1972) states that

> . . . content analysis seems to be not only an important neglected technique in curriculum evaluation, but also one which could save large amounts of student time and miseducation. Further, it could make materials preparation and implementation more effective through identifying [appropriate] methods of developing and implementing materials [p. 2].

In this vein, Lebofsky (1972) writes that ". . . data derived from content analysis studies of curriculum artifacts introduces a new dimension to formative and summative evaluation."

The literature suggests that content analysis is an appropriate research technique to use in descriptive and, more recently, inferential studies. Grobman (1972) has recognized both potentials:

> The former would provide profiles of our curricular materials, profiles we are now guessing at; the latter would relate such profiles to other concomitants--selected antecedents of materials preparation, to transactions during preparation, and to outcomes after completion [p. 3].

In summary, one of the major implications for content analysis as a research tool in curriculum development may be associated with evaluation, both formative and summative. There appears to be a great need for exactitude in the description of curricular materials. Grobman (1972) has assessed the principal implication as one of need:

> . . . we need a better understanding of the relationship between curriculum content and patterns of their environments, between what is in the curriculum and how it got to be this way, between what is in the curriculum and what happens to the curriculum--to determine how different people, circumstances, or processes produce different curricula [pp. 21-22].

*Belief Systems As Determinants of Curricular Decisions*

Gwynn and Chase (1969) have postulated that ". . . it is one's beliefs that differentiate one type of practice from another as commonly found in schools today (p. 601)." In addition, the same writers have advanced the notion that rigid and tradition-bound belief systems are exemplified in teacher behavior displaying skepticism, reluctance to alter the status quo, inter-communication breakdown, inflexibility, and non-directedness.

These behavioral characteristics have been verified by Harvey and others (1968) who discovered that some teachers with concrete belief systems identified by Harvey and others (1961) were imperceptive towards children's wishes and needs, inflexible, discouraged individual responsibility and free expression of feelings and creativity, unimaginative, rigid, rule-oriented, punitive, anxious, and dependent upon routines and structures. In the case of each dimension identified above, the antithesis was true for teachers in possession of abstract belief systems.

*Research with teachers.* Harvey (1970, b) has concluded that

> Probably the most crucial determinant of the classroom environment, and thus the learning conditions surrounding the students, is the behavior of the teacher and the atmosphere [that teacher] produces. In turn, [the teacher's] behavior, the resulting classroom atmosphere and the influence [that teacher] has on her students are all influenced heavily by the nature of [the teacher's] beliefs [p. 79].

Harvey and his associates have conducted two studies which are relevant to education (cf. p. 22). Other studies involving practising

teachers as well as student teachers have provided data which support Harvey's (1970, a) thesis that belief systems and conceptual frameworks of teachers exert a shaping influence upon the behaviors of teachers at every stage of the educative process.

*Implications for curricular decision making.* Harvey (1970, b) has summarized his research as follows:

> . . . curriculum techniques and method interact with the belief system and style of the teacher, the result being that a particular kind of curriculum or method may be very effective as practiced by one teacher and may be a dismal failure in the hands of another ]p. 81].

In addition to this observation, Harvey (1970, b) has stated that

> . . . the System 4 teacher is innovative in improvising materials, resources, and approaches to teaching while representatives of System 1, even when provided with abundant physical resources and equipment, still behave dictatorially and in ways that restrict the freedom and exploration of the students [p. 81].

If these observations are credible, then there is room to speculate upon the effects teachers' beliefs systems have on facets of the curricular decision making process such as the attitudes teachers hold towards the responsibility of curricular decision making, the elements teachers perceive as influences upon their curricular decisions, and the nature of the content in curricular plans developed by teachers.

*Synthesis*

In this chapter, several components of the curricular decision making process have been reviewed. A limited number of examples of research have been cited in curriculum development at the classroom

level. The greater part of the review has been based upon the observations of individuals who have been associated with the practice and study of curriculum development.

Curricular decision making by teachers has been viewed as a task comprised of process and design elements. The process elements were found to be: interpretation of the intents of a curriculum, identification and classification of learner needs, and subsequent selection of objectives to meet the identified needs. The design elements were found to be: scope, sequence, integration, resource acquisition, instructional procedures, and evaluative techniques.

Curricular plans have been described as collections of objectives, activities, and procedures related to the presentation of a specific set of concepts prepared by a teacher for use with particular learners. Ideally, it has been sequenced consciously and logically. Little was discovered about the content of teachers' curricular plans or the congruence of such content either with the broad goals of a curriculum or the actual instructional outcomes.

Much has been reported about those elements which influence the curricular decision making process. Although widespread consensus can be found to the effect that the broad categories of influential elements are learner characteristics, teacher characteristics, conditions within the school, and curriculum, there is little evidence which can be cited to validate any of these postulates.

Content analysis has very recently been applied as a research tool in curriculum development. The technique has promise for research

in curriculum, especially in the evaluation of various kinds of curriculum documents.

There is some evidence that a teacher's belief system influences the behavioral patterns of children within the classroom context. Further research is needed in order to determine whether other components of the educative process, including the development of curricular plans, are influenced by the belief systems of teachers.

Many questions and conceptual observations have been raised in the realm of curriculum development. There is an apparent need for research with teachers who are actually involved in the process of curricular decision making if answers to these questions are to be found and if such conceptualizations are to be tested.

# Chapter 3

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTATION

### *Introduction*

The research design was developed to investigate three aspects of curriculum development: the curricular decision making process, the elements which influence the curricular decisions of teachers, and the possible effects of teachers' belief systems upon their curricular decisions.

The study was conducted in five phases: the development of a teacher opinionnaire, a feasibility study, a pilot study, the main study, and the treatment and analysis of the data. The data were collected by means of a teacher opinionnaire, the *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71), and a curricular plan submitted by each teacher in the sample.

The sample was comprised of 21 teachers who were teaching fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies in the Province of Alberta at the time of the investigation. The sample size was suited to an extensive exploratory investigation.

### *Aspects of Curriculum Development*

Three areas of investigation were identified:

*(1) The curricular decision making process.* This part of the study was designed to determine opinions and attitudes of teachers in

terms of certain characteristics of the social studies handbook for elementary schools, *Experiences in Decision Making*, and the importance of selected curricular decisions which are generally regarded as the responsibility of teachers. In addition, the nature of the decisions reflected in the curricular plans used by teachers in the sample was determined by analyzing the content and, subsequently, categorizing the content units.

*(2) Elements which influence the curricular decisions of teachers.* This part of the study was designed to determine the elements which influence the curricular decisions of teachers. The teachers in the sample generated and ranked elements which they perceived as influences upon their curricular decisions. Then the teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which seventeen elements postulated by the investigator influenced their curricular decisions. A comparison was made to discover elements which were common to both influence groups.

*(3) The effects of belief systems upon teachers' curricular decisions.* This part of the study was designed to identify the belief system of each teacher in the sample and, subsequently, to examine relationships between belief systems and teachers' attitudes and opinions about the curricular decision making process, the elements teachers perceive as influences upon their curricular decisons, and teachers' curricular plans.

*Instrumentation*

The questionnaire package contained three instruments and a request for a curricular plan from each teacher in the sample.

*This I Believe Test (Form TIB-71).* This test was designed by Harvey (1964; 1965) to classify the belief systems of teachers according to four categories ranging from abstract to concrete. The instrument requires the respondent to complete in two or three sentences the phrase, "This I believe about _____," the blank being filled successively by such concept referents as "the Canadian way of life," "religion," "marriage," and "the legalization of marijuana." From the normativeness, absolutism, evaluativeness, and simplicity-complexity of the completions, together with criteria implied in the characterizations of concrete and abstract functioning, respondents are classified into one of the four principal conceptual systems and levels of abstractness posited by Harvey and others (1961). The test consists of ten items, each requiring a maximum of two minutes' writing time.

*Personal and professional information.* This part of the questionnaire package was designed to elicit demographic data. These were used as the basis for grouping respondents in the analysis of the data. The specific items included age, sex, years of post secondary education beyond twelfth grade, number of years of experience in teaching fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies, and the number of times *Experiences in Decision Making* served as the basis for curricular decision making. Respondents were also asked to enumerate university

courses and experiences other than university courses, which had been useful to them in the curricular decision making process.

*Teacher opinionnaire.* This part of the questionnaire package consisted of four sections.

The first section required each respondent to enumerate, and subsequently, to rank the elements which they perceived to influence their curricular decisions. Each element was recorded on a separate card by the teachers, arranged in order of importance, and handed to the investigator before proceeding with the rest of the opinionnaire.

The second section of the opinionnaire asked the teachers to respond to six aspects of *Experiences in Decision Making*:

(1) the extent to which the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*, places responsibility upon each teacher for making curricular decisions;

(2) the nature of *Experiences in Decision Making*;

(3) the clarity of the definitions of the valuing process, cognitive objectives, and affective objectives as given in *Experiences in Decision Making*; and

(4) the effect of the handbook upon teachers in the preparation of their curricular plans.

For each of the aspects, five discrete responses were supplied, one of which was selected by the respondent.

The third section of the opinionnaire required the respondents to indicate the degree of importance they attached to specific curricular decision making processes:

(1) personal understanding of broad goals as stated in the handbook;

(2) providing for children's needs;

(3) selection of objectives appropriate of children's needs; and

(4) selected curricular considerations such as determining content, sequence, integration, and evaluation.

For each response, the teachers were asked to indicate the degree of importance according to a five-point equal-interval scale of values ranging from "minimal" (1) through "great" (5).

The fourth section of the opinionnaire required the respondents to indicate the degree of importance they attached to seventeen postulated elements which influence the curricular decision making process. The elements were grouped into three categories:

(1) characteristics of the learner;

(2) conditions within the school; and

(3) the elementary social studies handbook.

For each response, the teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they were influenced by each element according to a five-point equal-interval scale of values ranging from "not at all" (1) through "to a very great extent" (5).

*Curricular plans.* A curricular plan was submitted by each respondent. If no written curricular plan was available, the respondent was asked to participate in a ten minute taped interview with the

investigator in which the teacher was asked to explain strategies he or she actually used in planning a curricular unit in social studies.

*Phases of the Study*

A description of each of the phases of the study is presented in consecutive order.

*Development of the opinionnaire.* Reading in the literature, experiences, and the conceptual framework devised by the investigator served as the sources of the items included in the initial opinionnaire. These items were revised or deleted in the light of responses received in the feasibility and pilot studies.

*Feasibility study.* The preliminary exploration involved interviews with four elementary school social studies teachers. They were asked to comment on the relevance of the proposed research to them and to offer constructive criticisms and suggestions about the content of the proposed teacher opinionnaire.

*Pilot study.* The revised instruments were administered to the four teachers who were involved in the feasibility study and two additional teachers who were new to the task. Validity and reliability of items in the teacher opinionnaire were established on the basis of consistency in the responses which were given by the four teachers who participated in both studies. The order in which items were to be presented in the final teacher opinionnaire was established and several items were clarified. Proposed changes were presented to teachers in

the pilot study group for constructive criticism. When agreement was reached on the acceptability of revised item form, the opinionnaire was prepared for the main study.

*Main study.* The main study took place over a period of four weeks. Once the sample was established and appointments were made with the participating teachers, the investigator arranged for the collection of data in a form which was mutually agreeable to the individuals involved. If the investigator's offer to exchange instructional duty for time taken by the cooperating teacher to complete the opinionnaire, arrangements were made for the administration of the *This I Believe Test* in the investigator's presence. Then the participating teacher completed the rest of the opinionnaire in a quiet location apart from the classroom. When teachers worked on their own, they were asked to complete the open-ended question first. They were asked to enumerate elements which influenced their curricular decisions. The envelope of completed cards was presented to the investigator before the other parts of the opinionnaire were approached. If the respondents required clarification, they were encouraged to consult the investigator. All participating teachers were asked to provide a copy of a curricular plan which they had prepared for instructional purposes. If the plan had been selected from another source, the teacher was asked to indicate special adaptations, additions, and deletions. If no written plan was available, arrangements were made for a taped interview during which teachers were encouraged to describe the curricular plans they used for instruction in their classrooms.

*Treatment of data.* The completed *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71) booklets were sent to the Department of Psychology in the University of Colorado to be read and scored by two experienced readers to assure reliability and validity in the results. The demographic data were summarized.

For the opinionnaire, the elements generated by teachers and ranked by them as influences upon their curricular decisions were tabulated according to frequency of occurrence and the weightings assigned by the teachers. A panel of five judges, comprised of three professors of elementary education, one teacher, and one graduate student in elementary education, was asked to categorize the elements identified by the teachers and to label those categories. The same panel of judges together with five additional educators--two elementary school administrators, one additional professor of elementary education, and two graduate students in elementary education--categorized the elements according to the classifications determined by the investigator and the first panel of judges. The resulting categorizations served as the summary of this part of the investigation.

The weightings attributed by teachers to each of seventeen elements postulated by the investigator were tabulated. The means and standard deviations were calculated by using DESTO7, a computerized descriptive statistics program available in the Division of Educational Research, The University of Alberta.

Data related to the curricular decision making process were arranged in tabular form. Means and standard deviations were calculated

using DESTO7 for data which were subgrouped according to the following criteria: age, sex, years of post secondary education, years of experience in teaching social studies to children in the upper elementary grades, belief system, and the school jurisdictions from which the sample had been drawn.

The curricular plans were analyzed using a computerized content analysis program, the *Alphabetic Sort and Frequency Count*, available from the Division of Educational Research, The University of Alberta. The sorted content units were categorized by three judges who formed a panel comprised of elementary teachers and a graduate student in elementary education. The content was classified according to six categories: instructional resources, curriculum, teacher characteristics, student characteristics, instructional procedures, and evaluation. The categorized content was tabulated in four sections based on teachers' belief systems in order to investigate the possibility of a relationship between the nature of the content in curricular plans and the belief systems of the teachers who developed them.

*Sample*

The sample consisted of 21 fourth, fifth, or sixth grade teachers of social studies who were randomly selected from large-city, small-city, and rural school jurisdictions. Three criteria for selection were used:

(1) the teachers had adopted *Experiences in Decision Making* to such an extent that their social studies classes were definitely characterized by an emphasis on the distinguishing features of the new

curriculum (Chamberlin and Crowther, 1973, p. 14);

(2) The teachers were instructing fourth, fifth, or sixth grade students in social studies; and

(3) the teachers perceived themselves as independent planners.

In each of the three school jurisdictions, the participating schools were randomly selected before the qualifying teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. The three distinct school jurisdictions were selected in anticipation of possible differences between or among the three subgroups of teachers. Community influence in this study was accommodated through the selection of these jurisdictions and not included in the list of elements influencing the curricular decision making process.

*Summary*

In this chapter, the design of the study was discussed. A brief description of the instrumentation was followed by a description of the sample. In the next chapter, a detailed account of the methodology has been presented.

## Chapter 4

## CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

### *Introduction*

This chapter contains a description of the feasibility study and the pilot study. Following an explanation of the sample selection, the conduct of the main study is outlined. In the final section of the chapter, the preparation of the data is reported.

### *Feasibility Study*

A feasibility study was carried out informally with two fourth grade teachers of social studies in an elementary school and two sixth grade teachers of social studies in an elementary-junior high school. Both institutions were located in a small school district.

*Purpose.* These four teachers were asked to complete the teacher opinionnaire as directed. Written criticisms were invited together with follow-up interviews between the investigator and each respondent. On the basis of these observations, the teacher opinionnaire was revised.

*Procedures.* Several specific alterations were made in the opinionnaire.

(1) The second section of the opinionnaire was deleted because the questions were considered tautological and, in two instances, vague. Lengthy definitions were deleted because they were confusing and three

items were removed from the fourth section because they were considered inapplicable.

(2) Terminology and definitions were simplified. For example, "cognitive" was changed to "knowledge" and "sequence" to "order of presentation." Directions were simplified and examples were provided for each section of the opinionnaire.

(3) Additional dimensions were included in the revised opinionnaire.

*Additional instrumentation.* (1) As a means of cross-validating teachers' assessments of the extent to which seventeen postulated elements influenced their curricular decisions, an open-ended task was added to the opinionnaire. The procedure was placed immediately after the administration of the *TIB* test in the sequence of activities.

When teachers completed this task for the pilot study, they were given an envelope of blank cards on which to record, one per card, the elements they perceived as influences when they were making curricular decisions. The elements were ranked by the teachers who arranged the cards in order, beginning with the most influential element and ending with the least influential.

The rationale for this undertaking involved the validation of the seventeen postulated elements in the opinionnaire. If, for example, a teacher assigned "resource availability" the weighting "5" in the opinionnaire, the same teacher might be expected to have recorded "resource availability" on one of the blank cards and to have ranked it

relatively high; if, on the other hand, a teacher assigned "type of instructional facility" the weighting "1" in the opinionnaire, the same teacher might be expected to have omitted this element in the enumeration and rank-ordering of influential elements.

(2) Gwynn and Chase (1969, p. 589) have suggested that belief systems which are rigid and traditional serve as major influences upon curricular decisions. Teachers who are characterized by such belief systems tend to function with skepticism, a reluctance to alter the *status quo*, a weak system of intercommunication, inflexibility, and personal nondirectedness. Prompted by this observation and the assumption that the antithesis could hold true, a search was made for a suitable instrument with which to assess teachers' belief systems.

The *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71) was selected for the purposes of this study. This test, developed by Harvey in 1964, is valid and reliable (Harvey, 1964, p. 213). Permission was secured to use the test in the pilot study.

(3) Each teacher was to be asked to supply a curricular plan which had been used recently, was currently in use, or was intended for use in the immediate future. These plans were to be used to cross-validate teachers' responses to questions about decision making processes and to substantiate the assertion made by Gwynn and Chase (1969) about the effects of teachers' belief systems on the kinds of curricular decisions they make.

All sections of the teacher opinionnaire and the *This I Believe Test* were incorporated into a questionnaire package which was used in the pilot project.

*Pilot Study*

The pilot study was conducted in the same school jurisdiction where the feasibility study took place.

*Purpose.* The pilot study was used to check the validity and reliability of the items included in the teacher opinionnaire. The order in which the instruments were presented was of special concern. Technical problems in the data collection procedure were identified.

*Sample.* The four teachers who participated in the feasibility study were involved for the second time. In addition, two fifth grade teachers in a second elementary-junior high school were included. The original sample of teachers was used in order to procure a second set of data from the same respondents.

*Procedures.* The *This I Believe Test* and the teacher opinionnaire were completed by each of the six teachers in the pilot sample. Respondents were asked to give their reactions and suggestions to assist in the preparation of the final version of the opinionnaire and the ordering of items for the main study.

*Modifications.* Several changes were made as the result of the pilot study.

(1) The responses to the open-ended question (Part III, Section D) in which the teachers were asked to enumerate and rank-order elements which influenced their curricular decisions revealed lists of elements similar to those postulated in Section C of the teacher

opinionnaire. A decision was made to relocate this task so that teachers would complete it before proceeding with the part of the opinionnaire containing the task of ranking elements which had been postulated by the investigator. The open-ended question became Section A in the finalized instrument.

In the main study, respondents were asked to give the envelope containing the ranked elements to the investigator before proceeding with Sections B, C, and D of the opinionnaire. This precaution was taken so that respondents could not refer to the elements they had generated when ranking the postulated elements.

In addition to the relocation of this task, the rank ordering of elements proved to be incompatible with the weightings assigned by the respondents to the elements postulated in Section C of the teacher opinionnaire. Consequently, the directions were changed so that the respondent arranged cards in five groups: those elements whose extent of influence was considered to be "very great" to be placed into one group after which each card in the pile was numbered "5" to correspond to the scale used in the opinionnaire. A similar procedure was used in the case of all remaining cards until the elements considered to be of "very little influence" were grouped and assigned the numeral "1."

(2) The wording of directions was clarified and highlighted for emphasis.

(3) The third alternative for Part III, Section A, Question 6, was changed from, "It has caused me to realize that my old curricular plans are inadequate in the light of the expressed objectives,

but I have not been able to attempt the development of appropriate plans yet" to read, "It has caused me to realize that my old curricular plans are inadequate in the light of the expressed objectives of *Experiences in Decision Making* and, consequently, I am in the process of attempting to develop appropriate plans."

A copy of the final *Questionnaire Package* has been placed in Appendix A.

*Validity and reliability of the teacher opinionnaire.* Six months had elapsed between the feasibility and pilot studies. The responses of the four teachers who participated in both studies were examined for consistency. A criterion level was established for this purpose. If a response for a particular item varied by one point in either direction, it was still considered valid. If the variation was greater, the respondents were asked for opinions. In some cases, items were reworded and in one case the item was discarded. The respondents claimed that they had no difficulty in understanding the questions or in selecting a response for the items which were revised. The scales were therefore deemed to be reliable.

*Selection of the Main Study Sample*

The sample was limited to 21 elementary teachers who were teaching elementary social studies in three distinct school jurisdictions. The teachers were randomly selected on the basis of eligibility determined by several specific criteria.

Permission was obtained to conduct the study in a large urban public school district, a small urban public school district, and a rural school division in the Province of Alberta. Copies of the correspondence are included in Appendix B.

*Criteria of selection.* In order to qualify for the study, a candidate had to be:

(1) a teacher of fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade social studies;

(2) a teacher using the elementary social studies handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*, as the basis for instruction in social studies; and

(3) a teacher who develops curricular plans independently.

Seven teachers were randomly selected from each jurisdiction. Although the selection criteria were identical in determining each subgroup, the sampling procedure varied slightly in each of the participating school jurisdictions.

*Large-city subgroup.* From the list of schools offering fourth, fifth, and sixth grade instruction, twelve schools were randomly selected using a table of random numbers (Keeping, 1962, p. 413). The Director of Educational Research for the school system selected eight qualifying schools out of twelve which had indicated willingness to participate in the study. The investigator then contacted the principal of each school to determine a list of the eligible teachers according to the three criteria outlined above. The teachers of one school were

disqualified on the grounds that they were planning collectively and they were not using *Experiences in Decision Making* as the basis for social studies instruction. The principal of each of the remaining schools submitted a list of eligible teachers to the investigator who subsequently applied a table of random numbers (Keeping, 1962, p. 413) three consecutive times to determine a first, second, and third choice. In the event that the first-named teacher could not participate for good reason, the second-named subject could be asked to participate; similarly, in the case of the second-named being unable to participate, the third-named could be asked. In the case of the large-city school district, the seven teachers who were approached initially agreed to participate in the study. Appointments were then made with each teacher to complete the questionnaire during the second and third weeks of December, 1972. Four teachers took advantage of the investigator's offer to perform classroom responsibilities while he or she completed all but Part I of the *Questionnaire Package*. If teachers worked independently, Part II, Section A was given to them separately. After this section had been completed, the balance of the *Questionnaire Package* was given to the teacher for completion in their own time.

*Small-city subgroup*. All elementary schools offering fourth, fifth, or sixth grade instruction were eligible for selection. A table of random numbers (Keeping, 1962, p. 413) was applied to the list of schools to determine the participating units. The lists of selected schools was forwarded to the Central Office of the participating small city district.

The Administrative Assistant supplied the investigator with the names of all teachers who were offering instruction in social studies in the selected schools. As in the large urban sample, first, second, and third choices were randomly selected. In one case, the teacher who had been selected initially was unable to participate since she had ceased teaching social studies because of intra-school reorganization. In this case, the second teacher was contacted and subsequently agreed to participate. Five of the seven teachers accepted the investigator's offer to carry out classroom duties in lieu of completing the research instrument.

*Rural subgroup.* The Superintendent of the rural school division submitted a list of eligible schools from which seven were selected randomly. When the investigator arrived in the division to conduct the study, a list of eligible teachers was presented for randomization. In all cases, the first-chosen teacher agreed to participate. Three teachers took advantage of the investigator's offer to teach for them while they completed the *Questionnaire Package*.

*Main Study*

The main study was conducted during a four-week period.

*Data collection.* When the investigator arrived in the small-city and rural school jurisdictions, a mutually agreeable time for each teacher was scheduled for the completion of the research instruments. Arrangements were also completed regarding the nature of exchange duties if the investigator was expected to relieve the participating teacher

during part of the data collection procedures. In the case of the large-city school system, principals were contacted first. Participating teachers then made arrangements with the investigator to complete the research instruments at an appointed time during a two-week period. The investigator was asked to report to the principal of each participating school before collecting data from the teacher concerned.

*Testing procedures.* The investigator timed each respondent during the administration of the *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71) according to the procedures established by the developer. A written curricular plan was collected from 17 respondents. One teacher in the rural subgroup who had no plan available agreed to describe his curricular planning activities during a taped interview. Three teachers in the large-city subgroup were unable to provide a written plan; all agreed to share their curricular decision making techniques during taped interviews. Two teachers in the large-city subgroup provided one of many unit plans they had developed for the system over a period of two years. The tapes were transcribed and the prepared data were analyzed in the same manner as the prepared content from the eighteen written plans.

*Data Preparation*

Data were processed in four stages.

*This I Believe Test.* The completed booklets were sent to O. J. Harvey at Colorado State University, Boulder, Colorado for reading and

scoring. This was done by Harvey and one of his clinical associates. The results were tabulated according to the means of the system scores and of the seven sub-dimensional scores.

*Personal and professional information.* Demographic data were tabulated together with subgroup and total sample means. Related professional information was summarized and tabulated by subgroup and by total sample.

*Curricular decision making components.* The responses from Part III of the teacher questionnaire, Sections B and C were tabulated. In addition, means and standard deviations for the data from Section C were calculated. Six criteria were used in subgrouping the data: age, sex, years of post secondary education, years of experience in teaching fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies, school jurisdiction, and belief system.

*Postulated elements.* Responses to Part III, Section D (three categories of environmental influence) were tabulated. Means and standard deviations for six subgroups were obtained. The subgrouping criteria were: age, sex, years of post secondary education, years of teaching experience related to upper elementary social studies, school jurisdiction, and belief system. Criterion levels were set in order to determine differences between and among subgroups on each of seventeen elements postulated in this part of the opinionnaire.

*Generated elements.* The elements which teachers had written on the blank cards were tabulated together with the weightings assigned to each item (1-5). An element was recorded upon its initial occurrence. The weighting was tabulated in the column assigned to the contributor. If a second teacher generated the same element, the weighting was recorded in that teacher's column. In this way, frequencies were obtained for each of 88 discrete elements generated. Total weightings were calculated for each element.

The elements were numbered randomly and reproduced on small cards. The "deck" was given to each member of a panel of five judges. They were asked to sort the eighty-eight items into affinity groups which they subsequently labelled. No *a priori* categories were supplied and there was no limit placed upon the number of categories which could be generated.

The groupings which were generated by the five judges were synthesized into six categories by the investigator. Then, the original judges together with five new judges attempted to assign each element to one of the six categories. The judges were instructed to lay unresolvable items aside in a residual group which was submitted with the six groups of categorized elements. These groupings were tabulated. If an element was assigned to a particular category seven times out of ten, it was considered to be a member of that set. Once the tabulation was completed, total weightings for all elements assigned to a particular category were tallied. Based upon the total weighting factor for each category, the six groupings were ranked in a descending order of importance.

*Data from curricular plans.* The texts of the written curricular plans and the transcriptions of the taped interviews were partially reduced for content analysis using the *Barrett Taxonomy* (Iler and Harway, in Gerbner, 1969). This technique is used to remove non-content words from basic text. The reduction is accomplished through the elimination of articles, prepositions except where they are an integral link in a unit of meaning, for example, "cap-in-hand," punctuation, numerals except when linked to a unit of meaning, for example, "eight-cylinder-motor," and deinflections. Further reduction was accomplished by eliminating reference titles, Christian names, and names of local cities, towns, and other specific geographical locations. A schedule of words and expressions which convey limited meaning, for example, "certainly," "maybe," served to reduce the text even further. Finally, some groups of words were hyphenated in order to retain full meaning, e.g., "affective-domain," and substitutions were made for long or awkward strings of words. A schedule of reduction techniques can be found in Appendix C. The "stripped" texts were entered on IBM cards, each of which was capable of holding sixty-five characters in addition to five characters for identification and ten for word spill-overs. The texts of 17 curricular plans and 4 taped interviews were transferred to a total of 621 IBM cards in preparation for processing in the computer.

This data was alphabetically tabulated and frequencies were assigned to each word by the computerized content analysis program, *Alphabetic Sort and Frequency Count*, which is available from the Department of Educational Research, The University of Alberta.

The content of the curricular plans and taped interviews was subsequently categorized according to its relationship to one of six criteria corresponding to the categories of elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions. These categories were:

(1) curriculum elements were subdivided into cognitive (knowledge) aspects, affective (social and personal) aspects, the valuing process, and design;

(2) instructional resources;

(3) instructional procedures;

(4) student characteristics;

(5) teacher characteristics; and

(6) evaluation.

Three judges were asked to assign each tabulated content unit to one of the six categories. If a word was not resolved, it was placed on a residual list. Assignments were based upon concensus among three judges, the criterion level at which a word became a member of a particular category. This procedure was followed for each of the 21 printouts.

Once the composition of each grouping was determined, the proportion of the prepared text from each curricular plan or interview devoted to each category was calculated and tabulated according to the teachers' belief system subgroup. Comparisons were made among the four sets of plans for similarities and differences which could be related to the belief system of the teacher as reflected in the curricular decisions made by that teacher.

*Summary*

This chapter was devoted to a detailed description of the conduct of the feasibility, pilot, and main studies together with an explanation of the procedures used in selecting the sample. An outline of the preparation of the data for analysis and discussion was presented in the final section of the chapter.

In the four following chapters, the analysis has been presented in four parts. In Chapter 5, the analysis of data consists of a description of the sample, the belief systems of the participating teachers, and the differences which occurred between and among subgroups.

## Chapter 5

## ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

### *Introduction*

In this part of the analysis, demographic characteristics, the belief systems of the teachers in the sample, and the differences accredited to subgrouping criteria are presented.

### *Demographic Characteristics*

Seven specific characteristics of teachers were considered to have some relevance to the study.

*Age.* Ages have been reported in terms of distribution according to the three subgroups associated with type of school system and in terms of means given for each subgroup and for the total sample (Table 1).

Ages were collapsed into three fifteen-year intervals: teachers who were 20-34 years of age; teachers who were 35-49 years of age; and teachers who were 50-64 years of age. In the total sample of 21 teachers, nine (43 percent) were 20-34 years of age, seven (33 percent) were 35-49 years of age, and five (24 percent) were 50-64 years of age.

The mean age of the seven teachers in the rural group was 37.7 years. For the seven small-city teachers, the mean age was 48.7 years. The mean age of the seven large-city teachers was 30.9 years. The mean age for the entire sample (twenty-one teachers) was 39.1 years.

Table 1

Frequencies, Percentages, and Means in Descriptive Categories of Teachers by School Jurisdiction

| DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES | | FREQUENCIES | | | | PERCENTAGES | | | | MEANS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total |
| 1. AGE | 20 - 34 Years | 3 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 43 | 0 | 86 | 43 | 37.7 | 48.7 | 30.9 | 39.1 |
| | 35 - 49 Years | 3 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 43 | 57 | 0 | 33 | | | | |
| | 50 - 64 Years | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 43 | 14 | 24 | | | | |
| 2. SEX | Male | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 29 | 14 | 29 | 24 | | | | |
| | Female | 5 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 71 | 86 | 71 | 76 | | | | |
| 3. YEARS Post Secondary Education (beyond Grade XII) | Less than 4 Years | 4 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 57 | 29 | 0 | 29 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 4.4 | 3.8 |
| | Four Years | 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 14 | 43 | 57 | 38 | | | | |
| | More than 4 Years | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 29 | 29 | 43 | 33 | | | | |
| 4. YEARS Experience Teaching 4th, 5th, or 6th Grade Social Studies | 1 - 5 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 10 | 43 | 29 | 71 | 48 | 6.0 | 9.9 | 4.4 | 6.8 |
| | 6 Years or More | 4 | 5 | 2 | 11 | 57 | 71 | 29 | 52 | | | | |
| 5. TIMES *Experiences in Decision Making* used as a basis of unit planning in 4th, 5th, or 6th Grade Social Studies | 1 Time | 3 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 43 | 43 | 29 | 38 | 3.6 | 2.0 | 4.7 | 3.4 |
| | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 29 | 14 | 29 | 24 | | | | |
| | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 14 | 43 | 0 | 19 | | | | |
| | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| | 5 or more Times | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 14 | 0 | 43 | 19 | | | | |

*Sex.* In the rural subgroup, two teachers (29 percent) were male and five (71 percent) were female. One teacher (14 percent) in the small-city subgroup was male; six (86 percent) were female. In the large-city subgroup of teachers, two (29 percent) were male and five (71 percent) were female. The total sample of twenty-one teachers was comprised of five (24 percent) males and 16 (76 percent) females.

*Years of post secondary education.* This characteristic has been reported in terms of distribution and of means.

Years of post secondary education (beyond Grade XII) have been reported according to three categories: less than four years, four years, and more than four years.

In the rural subgroup of seven teachers, four (57 percent) had less than four years of post secondary education. One teacher (14 percent) had four years of post secondary education while two (29 percent) had more than four years. In the small-city subgroup, two teachers (29 percent) had less than four years of post secondary education, three teachers (43 percent) had four years, and two teachers (29 percent) had more than four years. In the large-city subgroup of seven teachers, none had less than four years of post secondary education. Four teachers (57 percent) had four years while three (43 percent) had more than four years. In the total sample of twenty-one teachers, six (29 percent) had less than four years of post secondary education, eight (38 percent) had four years, and seven (33 percent) had more than four years.

The mean number of years of post secondary education completed by the seven teachers in the rural subgroup was 3.2; the seven small-city teachers had completed a mean of 3.7 years of post secondary education while the mean for the seven large-city school teachers was 4.4. The mean number of years of post secondary education completed by each teacher in the total sample was 3.8.

In addition to these data; respondents were asked to indicate the university courses they had taken which were of assistance to them in curricular planning. Discussion related to the description and categorization of these courses has been included in Appendix D.

Respondents were also asked to enumerate in-service and professional development activities which had assisted them in curricular planning. These experiences included all relevant activities *except* university courses. The description and categorization of these experiences have been included in a discussion which may be found in Appendix D.

*Years of experience.* The years of experience in teaching fourth, fifth, and sixth grade social studies have been reported in terms of distributions and means.

Years of experience in teaching fourth, fifth, and sixth grade social studies have been presented in two groups: 1-5 years and 6 or more years.

Three of the teachers (43 percent of the rural subgroup) had taught fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies for 1-5 years; four teachers (57 percent) had taught these levels of social studies

for six or more years. In the small-city subgroup of seven teachers, two (29 percent) had taught fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies for 1-5 years; five (71 percent) for more than six years. In the large-city subgroup of seven teachers, five (71 percent) had taught social studies at the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade levels for 1-5 years while two teachers (29 percent) had taught social studies at these levels for more than six years. In the total sample of 21 teachers, 10 had taught social studies at the upper elementary level for 1-5 years while 11 teachers had taught for 6 or more years.

The mean number of years during which teachers in the rural subgroup had been teaching social studies at the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade levels was 6.0; for the small-city teachers, the mean was 9.9 years; and for the large-city teachers, the mean was 4.4 years. In the total sample the mean number of years each teacher had taught social studies at the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade levels was 6.8.

*Teacher use of Experiences in Decision Making as a basis for curricular decision making.* Frequencies with which *Experiences in Decision Making* has been used as a basis for curricular decision making have been reported in terms of distributions and means.

In the rural subgroup, three teachers (43 percent) had used the handbook as a basis for curricular decison making once only, two teachers (29 percent) had used it twice, one teacher (14 percent) had used the handbook three times, and one teacher (14 percent) had used it five or more times. In the small-city subgroup, three teachers (43

percent) had used *Experiences in Decision Making* once, one teacher (14 percent) had used it twice, and three teachers (43 percent) had used the handbook as a basis for curricular decision making three times. In the large-city subgroup, two teachers (29 percent) had used *Experiences in Decision Making* once and two teachers (29 percent) had used it twice. Three teachers (43 percent) had used the handbook five or more times as the basis for curricular decision making.

Teachers in the rural subgroup had used the handbook an average of 3.6 times as the basis for curricular planning. Teachers in the small-city subgroup had used the handbook as a basis for curricular decision making an average of 2.0 times. In the large-city subgroup, the mean number of times teachers used the handbook as a basis for curricular decision making was 4.7. For the total sample, the average was 3.4 times.

*Teachers' Belief Systems*

The test booklets were scored by two researchers in the Department of Psychology, University of Colorado. The scores were used to classify teachers into four belief systems. The distribution of teachers in the sample by belief systems and according to the seven dimensions which make up the four belief systems are presented in Table 2.

*Descriptions of belief systems.* Four systems prevail. Respondents who are *predominantly* System 1 dimensionalize and construe the world in the most concrete mode. Their sentence completions are

Table 2

Number of Teachers in Each Belief System Category

| GROUPS | NO. OF TEACHERS | | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Belief System | | | | | Belief System | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total |
| Group 1 - Rural | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 86 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Group 2 - Small City | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 72 | 14 | 0 | 14 | 100 |
| Group 3 - Large City | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 43 | 14 | 14 | 29 | 100 |
| Totals | 14 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 21 | 67 | 14 | 5 | 14 | 100 |

very absolute, highly tautological, platitudinous and normative, highly ethnocentrific, religious, and moral, and express positive attitudes towards referents associated with institutions such as central offices and supervisory organizations.

Respondents who are classified as *predominantly* System 2 are highly evaluative and absolutistic. They tend to express negative attitudes towards marriage, religion, and the Canadian way of life, the same referents towards which System 1 individuals are positive.

Respondents who are *predominantly* System 3, next to highest level of abstractness, are more relativistic and less evaluative than System 1 or 2 subjects. They tend to express more positive beliefs about friendship, people, and interpersonal relations.

Respondents who are *predominantly* System 4 represent the highest level of abstractness. Their responses imply a high degree of novelty and appropriateness, independence without negativism, high relativism and contingency, and of the ability to think perceptively and accurately. Representatives of this system generally use multi-dimensional rather than unidimensional interpretive categories.

*Findings.* At least one member of the sample was categorized in each of the four systems identified by the *TIB* scores.

*(i) System 1.* Fourteen of the teachers (67 percent of the sample) were classified as representatives of System 1. Within the subgroups, the following numbers of teachers were classified as System 1: six rural teachers, five small-city teachers, and three large-city teachers.

*(ii) System 2.* Three teachers (14 percent of the sample) were categorized as System 2. One teacher in each of the three subgroups was classified according to the second belief system.

*(iii) System 3.* Only one teacher (5 percent of the sample) was categorized as representative of System 3; the individual was in the large-city subgroup.

*(iv) System 4.* Three of the teachers (14 percent of the sample) were classified as System 4; one was a small-city teacher and the other two were from the large-city group.

*Summary.* In the case of 14 System 1 subjects, ten were "pure" examples of the systen. Three of the subjects showed some evidence of System 3 and one teacher showed some evidence of System 4. In classifying subjects, Harvey (1973) suggests that the dominant system be used as the chief categorization criterion.

In the case of the three System 2 subjects, one teacher was a "pure" example of the system. One subject showed some evidence of System 1 and one showed some evidence of System 4. Again, the three System 2 subjects are dominantly System 2.

The one System 3 subject was a "pure" example of the system.

In the case of the three System 4 subjects, one teacher exemplified a "pure" version of the system. Two subjects showed some evidence of System 1. Harvey (1970, b) reports that

> . . . only a small percentage of teachers (approximately 7 percent) appear to be functioning at the level of System 4 while a large majority represent clear System 1 functioning or an admixture of System 1 with System 3 [p. 80].

*Scores obtained on dimensions.* Test scores were reported in terms of overall belief systems and for the seven auxiliary dimensions which were rated on a five-point scale by the readers (Table 3). The scores provided by each reader were averaged to obtain the values reported in the table.

*(i) Openness.* The respondents presumed willingness seriously to entertain and possibly accept an idea contrary to his own more central ones.

Table 3

Summary of Systems and Dimension Scores
on the *This I Believe Test*

| System | Subject | Percent of Sample | | DIMENSIONS: Openness | Candor | Evaluativeness | Externality | Cynicism | Optimism | Complexity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Scale: 1-5; Greatest amount of dimension = 5 | | | | | | |
| 1 | 01 | | | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| | 02 | | | 2.0 | 2.5 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 04 | | | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 05 | | | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| | 06 | | | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 |
| | 07 | | | 1.0 | 2.5 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| | 08 | | | 2.5 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 11 | | | 2.0 | 2.5 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 12 | | | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 5.0 | 1.0 | 3.5 | 2.0 |
| | 13 | | | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 5.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 2.5 |
| | 14 | | | 1.5 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 17 | | | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 18 | | | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| | 21 | | | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| N = 14 | | 67 | Mean | *2.0* | *2.4* | *3.7* | *3.7* | *1.9* | *2.7* | *2.2* |
| 2 | 03 | | | 2.0 | 2.5 | 4.0 | 1.5 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| | 09 | | | 3.0 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| | 15 | | | 2.5 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| N = 3 | | 14 | Mean | *2.5* | *3.0* | *3.3* | *1.5* | *3.5* | *2.0* | *3.0* |
| 3 | 16 | | | 3.0 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| N = 1 | | 5 | Mean | *3.0* | *2.5* | *3.0* | *1.0* | *2.5* | *2.0* | *3.0* |
| 4 | 10 | | | 3.5 | 3.5 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 3.5 |
| | 19 | | | 4.5 | 5.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| | 20 | | | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| N = 3 | | 14 | Mean | *3.8* | *4.0* | *2.0* | *1.0* | *1.0* | *3.0* | *3.8* |
| N = 21 | | 100 | GRAND MEAN | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 3.0 |

The System 1 respondents reported a mean score of 2.0 in openness while the System 2 teachers scored 2.5, the System 3 individual scored 3.0, and System 4 respondents reported a mean score of 3.8 on this dimension. The System 4 (abstract belief) teachers were the most open; System 1 most closed.

*(ii) Candor.* The assumed forthrightness of self-honesty with which a response is made. Candor implies low denial and low defensiveness.

Respondents who were categorized as System 1 and System 4 scored means of 2.4 and 2.5 respectively. System 2 teachers indicated a mean score of 3.0 on this dimension while the System 4 group scored 4.0, the highest ranking on candor.

*(iii) Evaluativeness.* The tendency to make good-bad, right-wrong judgements which hold obvious pejorative implications.

In descending order, System 1 respondents indicated the highest mean score on this dimension--3.7. System 2 and 3 scored 3.3 and 3.0 respectively. Teachers with abstract belief systems (System 4) indicated a mean score of 2.0 on this dimension, thus indicating low priority on evaluation.

*(iv) Externality.* The respondent's tendency to attribute success, failure, or control of his actions to forces over which he has little or no control, including such things as luck, other persons, and social obstacles.

In this dimension, only System 1 respondents indicated a high mean score of 2.8. The teachers in Systems 2, 3, and 4 reported mean scores of 1.5, 1.0, and 1.0 respectively.

*(v) Cynicism.* The tendency to express nihilism and to ascribe worthlessness to everything in general.

The System 2 respondents were highest (3.5) in this dimension. The System 3 teacher reported 2.5, System 1 respondents scored a mean of 1.9, and System 4 subjects were least cynical; their score was 1.0.

*(vi) Optimism.* The assumed feeling of well-being and that things will, or already have, turn out well.

System 4 respondents scored 3.0 on this dimension. System 1 teachers reported a mean score of 2.7 and System 2 and 3 subjects each scored 2.0 representing the subgroups displaying the least optimism in the sample.

*(vii) Complexity.* The number of different themes expressed together with their integration--a kind of judged profundity or depth of thought.

In ascending order, System 1 scored lowest in complexity--2.2. System 2 and 3 subjects scored 3.0 while System 4 teachers provided the highest mean score of 2.8 on this dimension.

*Summary.* System 1 subjects tended to be low in openness, candor, cynicism, optimism, and complexity; high on evaluativeness and externality.

System 2 respondents were low in openness, externality, and optimism; mid-range in candor, evaluativeness, cynicism, and complexity.

The System 3 respondent indicated a low score in candor, externality, cynicism, and optimism; mid-range in openness, evaluativeness, and complexity.

System 4 respondents scored high in openness, candor, and complexity; mid-range in optimism; low in evaluativeness, externality, and cynicism.

*Means and Standard Deviations*

Means and standard deviations between and among groups were calculated on the bases of seven criteria: age, sex, years of post secondary education, years of experience in teaching fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies, school system, and the belief system as indicated by the *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71).

In order to be recognized, differences between or among groups on any one criterion had to meet two conditions:

(1) the difference had to be equivalent to at least one full unit on the five-point scale, and

(2) the standard deviation between the maximum values had to be less than 1.0. The latter criterion seemed to correspond to the consistency-inconsistency criterion which was used in conjunction with the interpretation of the tables.

Differences which were recognized occurred when the sample was subdivided according to age, years of post secondary education, school jurisdiction and belief system.

*Postulated influences on teachers.* Differences were recognized in the cases of four subtests:

*(i) Age.* In Table 4, means and standard deviations have been shown for two items--size of class and type of facility--on which age subgroups differed according to the accepted criteria. The older of the two subgroups of teachers (50-64 years of age) indicated that the size of class exerted considerable influence upon their curricular decisions while the other subgroup of teachers (35-49 years of age) indicated that class size influenced their curricular decisions to some extent. This information was reported in (a), Part B, Section D of the opinionnaire. The younger of the two subgroups of teachers (35-49 years of age) indicated that the type of facility in which they teach exerted an amount of influence ranging from some to considerable upon their curricular decisions. The older subgroup of teachers (50-64 years of age) indicated that the type of facility influenced their curricular decisions very little. This information was reported in (c), Part B, Section D of the opinionnaire.

Table 4

Mean Differences and Standard Deviations on Two Influential Elements According to Age Groupings

| | Element | Age Group in Years | Maximum Value | Minimum Value | Group Mean | Difference Between Group Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Size of Class | 35 - 49 | 4.0 | 1.0 | 2.9 | | 0.99 |
| | | 50 - 64 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 1.1 | 0.89 |
| 2 | Type of Facility | 35 - 49 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.4 | | 0.49 |
| | | 50 - 64 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.2 | 1.2 | 0.75 |

*(ii) Years of post secondary education.* In Table 5, the means and standard deviations have been shown for the item--type of space--on which influence differed between subgroups according to years of post secondary education. The subgroup of teachers who had more than four years of post secondary education indicated that the type of space in which activities take place exerted some influence upon their curricular decisions while the subgroup of teachers who had less than four years of post secondary education indicated that the type of space influenced their curricular decisions very little.

Table 5

Mean Differences and Standard Deviations on One Influential Element According to Years of Post Secondary Education

| | Element | Years of Post Secondary Education | Maximum Value | Minimum Value | Group Mean | Differences Between Group Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Type of Space | < 4 yr. | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | | 0.58 |
| | | > 4 yr. | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 0.76 |

*(iii) School jurisdiction.* In Table 6, means and standard deviations have been shown for an item on which influence differed between subgroups according to school jurisdiction. The subgroup of small-city teachers indicated that the curriculum handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*, exerted some to considerable influence upon their curricular decisions while the subgroup of large-city teachers indicated that the handbook exerted very little to some influence upon their curricular decision making activities.

Table 6

Mean Differences and Standard Deviations on One Influential Element According to School Jurisdiction

| Element | Subgroup | Maximum Value | Minimum Value | Group Mean | Difference Between Group Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Curriculum Handbook *(Experiences in Decision Making)* | Small City | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.6 | | 0.49 |
| | Large City | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.6 | . 1.0 | 0.49 |

*(iv) Belief system.* In Table 7, means and standard deviations have been shown for six items where the degree of influence differed between subgroups based upon teacher belief systems. Teachers classified in belief systems 4, 2, and 1 indicated that the social and personal needs of the child influenced their curricular decisions from a considerable extent to a very great extent while the System 3 teacher rated this item as having only some influence upon his curricular decisions.

The System 3 teacher indicated that the talents of the child influenced his curricular decisions to a very great extent while System 4, 1, and 2 teachers indicated that this element influenced their curricular decisions from some to a considerable extent.

The System 3 teacher indicated that the type of space in which he teaches influenced his curricular decisions to a considerable extent while System 4 and 1 teachers indicated that this element exerted little influence upon their curricular decision making activities.

System 1, 2, and 4 teachers indicated that access to appropriate instructional materials exerted less than considerable influence upon

Table 7

Mean Differences and Standard Deviations on Six Influential Elements According to Belief System Groupings

| Element | Sub-Group(s) | Maximum Value | Minimum Value | Group Mean | Difference Between Group Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Social and Personal Needs of the Child | System 4 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.7 | | 0.47 |
| | System 2 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.3 | | 0.47 |
| | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 4.2 | | 0.56 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 1.7/1.3/1.2 | 0.00 |
| 2 Talents of the Child | System 3 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | | 0.00 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 4 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | | 0.47 |
| | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.5 | | 0.63 |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 1.3/1.5/1.7 | 0.47 |
| 3 Type of Space | System 3 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | | 0.00 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 4 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.3 | | 0.47 |
| | System 1 | 4.0 | 1.0 | 2.5 | 1.7/1.5 | 0.98 |
| 4 Access to Instructional Resources | System 1 | 5.0 | 1.0 | 3.7 | | 0.88 |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | | 0.47 |
| | System 4 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | | 0.94 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 3 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.7/2.7/2.7 | 0.00 |
| 5 Paraprofessional Assistance | System 3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | | 0.00 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | | 0.00 |
| | System 1 | 4.0 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 1.0/1.2 | 0.94 |
| 6 Curriculum Handbook (*Experiences in Decision Making*) | System 4 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | | 0.47 |
| | System 1 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.1 | | 0.59 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.3/1.1 | 0.00 |

their curricular decisions while the System 3 teacher reported that no influence was attributable to this element.

The System 3 teacher indicated that his curricular decisions were influenced to some extent by the availability of paraprofessional assistance while System 2 and 1 teachers attributed very little influence to this element.

System 4 and 1 teachers indicated that the curriculum handbook influenced their curricular decisions to some extent while the System 3 teacher reported that this element exerted very little influence upon his curricular decision making activities.

*Influences on teacher choices.* Differences were recognized in the cases of two subtests.

*(i) Sex.* The male subgroup indicated that the relationship of one area of study to another ranged in importance from considerable to great while the female subgroup indicated importance ranging from moderate to minimal (Table 8).

Table 8

Mean Differences and Standard Deviations on One Curricular Decision Making Component According to Sex

| Curricular Decision Making Component | Sex | Maximum Value | Minimum Value | Group Mean | Differences Between Group Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Relationship of one area of study with another | Male | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.4 | | 0.49 |
| | Female | 4.0 | 1.0 | 3.3 | 1.1 | 0.83 |

*(ii) Belief system.* In all, differences among belief system groups were recognized when the importance of ten curricular decision making components was reported. System 4 and 2 teachers indicated that their personal understanding of the valuing process was more important to them than it was to the System 3 teacher who attributed slight importance to this component.

When considering the importance of personal understanding of the affective objectives, System 1, 4, and 2 teachers assigned mean values of 3.8, 3.7, and 3.0 while the System 3 teacher assigned a mean importance value of 2.0.

Provision for the knowledge needs of children was assigned a mean importance value of 4.3 by the System 1 teachers while System 2 teachers attached a value of 3.3 to the component.

System 2 teachers attached considerable to great importance to provision for the social and personal needs of children. System 4 teachers assigned a mean value of 3.7 to the importance of this component while the System 4 mean was 4.7.

System 4 teachers indicated that the selection of appropriate objectives to meet children's specific needs was of considerable importance (4.3) while System 2 teachers assigned a mean value of 3.3 to this component.

The amount of content was of considerable importance to the System 3 teacher and of moderate importance to the members of the System 2 subgroup.

Table 9

Mean Differences and Standard Deviations on Ten Curricular Decision Making Components According to Belief System Groupings

| Curricular Decision Making Component | Sub-Group(s) | Maximum Value | Minimum Value | Group Mean | Difference Between Group Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1a Personal understanding of the valuing process | System 4 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | | 0.00 |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | | 0.47 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0/1.3 | 0.00 |
| b Personal understanding of the affective objectives | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.8 | | 0.67 |
| | System 4 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | | 0.47 |
| | System 2 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | | 0.00 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.8/1.7/1.0 | 0.00 |
| 2a Provision for the knowledge needs of children | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 4.3 | | 0.59 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 1.0 | 0.47 |
| b Provision for the social and personal needs of children | System 2 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.7 | | 0.47 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 4 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | 1.0 | 0.47 |
| 3a Selection of appropriate objectives to meet knowledge needs | System 4 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 4.3 | | 0.94 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 1.0 | 0.47 |
| 4a Amount of Content | System 3 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | | 0.00 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 2 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 0.00 |
| b Order in which material is presented | System 1 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | | 0.45 |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | | 0.47 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 4 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.3 | 1.0/1.0 | 0.94 |
| c Relationship of one area of study with another | System 3 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | | 0.00 |
| | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.8 | | 0.67 |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | | 0.47 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 4 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 2.0/1.8/1.7 | 0.81 |
| d Provision of chance to role play, etc. | System 2 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.3 | | 0.47 |
| | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.9 | | 0.80 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.3/1.9 | 0.00 |
| g Checking up on progress at the end of the unit | System 1 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.9 | | 0.59 |
| | System 2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.7 | | 0.47 |
| | System 3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | | 0.00 |
| | vs | | | | | |
| | System 4 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.9/1.7/1.0 | 0.82 |

The order in which materials are presented (sequence) was ascribed moderate importance by System 1 and 3 teachers while System 4 teachers felt that this component was of minimal importance to them.

System 3, 1, and 2 teachers designated considerable to moderate importance to the relationship of one area of study to another. System 4 teachers accorded this component with slight importance.

System 2 and 1 teachers attributed importance ranging from moderate to considerable to the provision of chances for children to role play and interact with one another. The System 3 teacher reported slight importance in this dimension.

System 1, 2, and 3 teachers ascribed importance ranging from moderate to considerable to the function of checking up on progress at the conclusion of a unit (summative evaluation). System 4 teachers indicated slight importance.

*Summary of the Analysis*

In this chapter, demographic characteristics of the sample, belief systems of the teachers, and descriptive statistics have been reported.

Fourteen teachers were categorized as System 1--those holding to a concrete belief system. Three teachers were classified in System 2, one was placed in System 3, and three teachers were categorized as System 4--those holding to an abstract belief system.

It was shown that the type of belief system held by a teacher may be related to that teacher's view of the curricular decision making process.

In the next chapter, the analysis of influences on teacher's curricular decisions has been presented.

Chapter 6

# ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCES ON TEACHERS' CURRICULAR DECISIONS

## *Introduction*

Elements which influence the curricular decision making process were postulated for this study. They have been analyzed according to three categories: the learner, the school, and the elementary school social studies handbook. Elements which influence the curricular decision making process were generated by the teachers themselves. These have been analyzed according to six categories: instructional resources, curriculum, student characteristics, teacher characteristics, instructional procedures, and evaluation.

## *Postulated Elements*

This part of the analysis was based upon the responses to questions in Part III, Section D of the opinionnaire which was designed to elicit teachers' perceptions of the importance of seventeen postulated elements which influence the curricular decision making process. The influences were grouped according to three categories: elements associated with the learner, the school, and the curriculum (in this instance, *Experiences in Decision Making*). The extent to which each element influenced the respondent was indicated on a five-point scale. The responses have been examined in relation to the degree of consistency or inconsistency. Consistency was determined according to the

following criteria:

(1) In the case of each subgroup of the sample if 6 or 7 subjects (86-100 percent of the subgroup) responded in three adjacent categories, the mean score was considered to be characteristic of that subgroup (Table 10).

(2) In the case of the total sample, if 18 to 21 subjects (86-100 percent of the sample) responded in three adjacent response categories, the mean score was considered to be meaningful.

*Learner.* Five elements were considered: the need for knowledge, social and personal needs of the student, the need for skills, interests of the student, and the talents of the individual (Table 10).

Responses to the five queries were consistent in every instance. In all cases, the extent of influence reported by the teachers was 3.0 or more. The mean response of each subgroup was consistently lower for "talents." The lower mean (3.6) for the total sample reflects the level of responses from teachers in the large-city group. These teachers also indicated that the influence of the learner's need for knowledge is not as important to them; this accounts for the somewhat lower mean (3.9) for this element in the total sample. In summary, the social and personal needs, the need for skills, and the interests of learners appear to have influenced the teachers in the total sample to a greater extent than any other learner characteristic postulated for this study.

Table 10

Extent to Which Postulated Elements Influence Teachers in the Curricular Decision Making Process By Subgroup and Total Sample

| | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total Sample |
| To what extent do the following characteristics of learners influence you when you are developing curricular plans: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. the need for knowledge | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 14 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 67 | 14 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 3.9 |
| b. social and personal needs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 12 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 57 | 33 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.2 |
| c. the need for skills | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 71 | 19 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.2 |
| d. interest | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 17 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 81 | 14 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.2 |
| e. talents | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 52 | 38 | 9 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.6 |

*School.* Eleven elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions were considered: class size; type of teaching space, facility, and furnishings; scheduling and reporting procedures; morale; time for planning; funds; access to instructional materials; and paraprofessional assistance (Table 11).

Responses concerning the influence exerted upon the planning activities of the respondents by the type of facility in which they teach, the type of furnishings they use, school morale, funds for instructional necessities, and paraprofessional assistance were judged to be consistent. If means are examined in conjunction with the type of space in which rural teachers must work (2.3) and with scheduling procedures (3.4) under which this same subgroup of teachers function, then consistency in the total response to these elements may also be assumed.

Responses to the four remaining items--class size, reporting procedures, time for planning, and access to instructional materials--were judged as being inconsistent because of a bi-modality factor in three cases and a scattered response in the fourth. The teachers in the rural subgroup attached either very little/no importance or considerable/very great importance to the size of the class as an element which influenced their development of curricular plans. The small-city teachers' responses were bi-modal in relation to the importance of reporting procedures, record keeping, and other school policies. The mean score of 2.6 for the total sample is, however, representative of the overall response pattern.

## Table 11

### Extent to Which Postulated Elements Influence Teachers in the Curricular Decision Making Process By Subgroup and Total Sample

| 2. To what extent do the following conditions in your school influence you when you are developing curricular plans: | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total Sample |
| a. the number of students to be instructed at any one time. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 19 | 33 | 29 | 9 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| b. the type of space in which teaching is to take place (confined, as in a closed classroom; shared, as in open space, etc.). | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 9 | 38 | 29 | 24 | 0 | 2.3 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| c. the type of facility in which teaching is to take place (closed classroom, laboratory, multi-purpose room, open space, library, etc.). | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 24 | 38 | 24 | 5 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 2.9 |
| d. the type of furnishings, lighting, versatility, and other physical features of the facility in which teaching is to take place. | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 43 | 48 | 9 | 0 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.5 |
| e. timetabling, scheduling, and other timing limitations which are peculiar to your own school. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 19 | 38 | 29 | 9 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 3.2 |
| f. reporting procedures, record keeping, and other policies which are peculiar to your own school. | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 38 | 38 | 14 | 0 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.6 |
| g. the cooperative and friendly spirit of the school in which you teach. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 33 | 43 | 9 | 2.7 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 3.4 |
| h. time during regular school hours for planning (i.e., making curricular decisions; developing unit plans, etc.). | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 24 | 29 | 5 | 29 | 14 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 3.3 | 2.7 |
| i. funds for instructional materials, field trips, etc. | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 38 | 43 | 9 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 3.3 |
| j. access to necessary instructional materials such as audio-visual aides, references, community resources, etc. (they may exist but you may not be able to get at them easily). | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 12 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 24 | 57 | 9 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| k. assistance in the form of teacher aides, secretarial services, technicians who can set up and run machines, etc. | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 33 | 43 | 19 | 5 | 0 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.0 |

The element of time during regular school hours for curricular planning occasioned an irregular response pattern from all three subgroups. Rural and small-city teachers furnished a bi-modal response: time was either an important influence or it was not. Large-city teachers demonstrated a scattered view; no definite pattern of importance was evident.

The large-city teachers indicated a scattered response to the item referring to access to necessary instructional materials.

Access to necessary instructional materials (3.6), morale in the school (3.4), funds for instructional necessities (3.3), and scheduling procedures (3.2) appeared to exert the greatest amount of influence upon the respondents when they are developing curricular plans. Although the remaining elements were ranked consistently, they were perceived to exert little influence upon respondents' curricular decisions.

*The curriculum handbook.* The overall response to this item was judged to be consistent (Table 12). Although the mean score of the total sample was 3.0, the small-city respondents indicated the greatest extent of influence (3.6) while the large-city respondents indicated the least extent of influence (2.6) attributed to this item as an influence upon their curricular decisions.

Table 12

Extent to Which the Curriculum (A Postulated Element) Influences Teachers in the Curricular Decision Making Process by Subgroup and Total Sample

| | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Not at All 1 | Very Little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total Sample |
| 3. To what extent does the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*, influence you when you are developing curricular plans? | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 62 | 19 | 0 | 2.9 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 3.0 |

*Generated Elements*

This section of the analysis was based upon the responses which teachers made to Part III, Section A of the teacher opinionnaire which was designed to elicit from the teachers the elements they perceived as influences upon their curricular decisions. The respondents were asked to write as many elements as they could think of, one per card, when they completed this open-ended question.

Eighty-eight discrete elements were tabulated. The weightings (1-5) were recorded for later use in determining the ranking of the categories into which the elements were placed by a panel of ten judges.

*Synthesis of categories.* Each of five judges (the first panel) sorted the 88 elements into two to eleven broad categories. In consultation with the judges, the entire range of suggested categories was synthesized by the investigator into the following:

(1) instructional resources;

(2) curriculum elements;

(3) student characteristics;

(4) teacher characteristics;

(5) instructional procedures; and

(6) evaluation.

*Categorization.* A panel of 10 judges (the members of the first panel together with 5 additional judges) attempted to place each of the 88 elements into one of the assigned categories. They were instructed to assign unresolved elements into a "miscellaneous" category.

If an element was assigned to a particular category seven times out of ten, the element was considered as a member of that set. Elements whose assignment did not reach this criterion level were placed on a residual list of uncategorized items. Based upon this criterion level, a total of 74 elements were assigned to categories and 14 elements remained uncategorized.

*(i) Instructional resources.* Eighteen elements (20 percent of the original group of 88 elements) were assigned to this category by seven or more of the ten judges (Table 13). The 18 elements were recorded by the respondents 95 times and were assigned an aggregate weighting of 310. Recording frequencies were 38 for the small-city subgroup of teachers, 32 for the rural subgroup, and 25 for the large-city subgroup. Availability of instructional materials, access to library facilities, and relevant filmstrips and films ranked highest (69 each) within the category. Of considerably less consequence (15-8) were: resources to be found within the community (15), availability of resource people in the community (15), resource persons with special expertise (12), appropriate reference books (12), field trips (11), and space in which to work (8). The remaining elements achieved aggregate weightings of 6-1: consultative services (6), suitable materials (5), audio visual aides (4), appropriate classroom facilities (4), relevant poetry and music (3), appropriate display areas (3), free reading books (2), school policy regarding activities (2), and economics (1).

Table 13

Elements Assigned to the Instructional Resource Category of Influence

| Rank | Element | Recording Frequencies | | | | Weighting TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | |
| 1.3 | Availability of instructional materials | 5 | 7 | 6 | 18 | 69 |
| 1.3 | Access to library facilities | 5 | 7 | 6 | 18 | 69 |
| 1.3 | Relevant filmstrips and films | 5 | 7 | 6 | 18 | 69 |
| 2.5 | Availability of resource personnel in community | 1 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 15 |
| 2.5 | Resources to be found in the community | 1 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 15 |
| 3.5 | Resource personnel whose expertise can be used for a limited time | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 12 |
| 3.5 | Appropriate reference books | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 12 |
| 4 | Field trips | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 11 |
| 5 | Availability of suitable space in which to work | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| 6 | Consultative services from outside school | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| 7 | Suitable materials for students to work with | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 8.5 | Audio-visual aides | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 8.5 | Classroom facilities such as open space | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 9.5 | Relevant poetry and music | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 9.5 | Space in which to arrange displays | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 10.5 | School policies about activities | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 10.5 | Relevant free-reading books | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 11 | Economics: finances for materials | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Totals | 32 | 38 | 25 | 95 | 310 |

*(ii) Curriculum elements.* Fifteen elements (17 percent of the original group of 88) were assigned to this category by seven or more of the ten judges (Table 14). The 15 elements were recorded by the

Table 14

Elements Assigned to the Curriculum Elements Category of Influence

| Rank | Element | Recording Frequencies: Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | Weighting TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Objectives to be met as the result of instruction | 2 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 40 |
| 2.5 | "What" to teach | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 39 |
| 2.5 | The generalizations to be comprehended | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 39 |
| 3 | Skill development in students | 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 34 |
| 4 | The curriculum guide | 3 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 28 |
| 5.5 | Values to be realized | 3 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 20 |
| 5.5 | The valuing process | 0 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 20 |
| 6 | Time available to do a project | 4 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 18 |
| 7 | Relationships among curriculum areas | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 11 |
| 8 | The "why" for planning | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| 9 | Scope | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| 10.3 | Development of individual responsibilities for students | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 10.3 | Development of independence in students | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 10.3 | Integration of subjects | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 11 | Nature of content to be considered | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Totals | 17 | 25 | 26 | 68 | 278 |

respondents a total of 68 times and were assigned an aggregate weighting of 278. Recording frequencies were 26 for the large-city subgroup, 25 for the small-city subgroup, and 17 for the rural subgroup. Objectives to be met as the result of instruction drew the highest weighting factor of 40. "What" to teach and the generalizations to be comprehended were both weighted at 39. Skill development in students (34), the curriculum guide (28), and values to be realized and the valuing process (both 20) ranked next highest. The remaining eight elements were weighted as follows: time available to do a project (18), relationships among curriculum areas (11), the "why" of planning (10), and scope (6). Development of individual responsibility in students, development of independence in students, and integration of subjects were equally weighted at 4 each and the nature of content to be considered (1) ranked last in importance as a curriculum element which influenced the curricular decisions of the respondents.

*(iii) Student characteristics.* Sixteen elements (18 percent of the original group of 88) were assigned to this category by seven or more of the judges (Table 15). The 15 elements were recorded by the respondents 58 times and were assigned an aggregate weighting of 217. The rural subgroup of teachers was responsible for 22 of these recordings, the small-city subgroup made 19 and the large-city subgroup recorded elements belonging to this category a total of 17 times. Four elements received the highest weightings: student interest and topic (45), ability of students (33), needs of the child (25), and previous

Table 15

Elements Assigned to the Student Characteristics Category of Influence

| Rank | Element | Recording Frequencies | | | | Weighting TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | |
| 1 | Student interest in topic | 3 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 45 |
| 2 | Ability of students | 3 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 33 |
| 3 | Needs of the child | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 25 |
| 4 | Previous experience of students | 2 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 22 |
| 5.5 | Cooperation among students in a participatory instructional group | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 14 |
| 5.5 | Communication patterns among students | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 14 |
| 6 | Sociological factors affecting the student | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 11 |
| 7.5 | Grade level to be taught | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 9 |
| 7.5 | Individual differences among students | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| 8.5 | Skill level of student before unit begun | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 |
| 8.5 | Maturity of children in class | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| 9.5 | Student's lack of particular knowledge | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| 9.5 | Student's lack of particular skill | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| 10.5 | Student's environment outside school | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 10.5 | Reading level of class | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 11 | Personality factors within the class | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| | Totals | 22 | 19 | 17 | 58 | 217 |

experience of children (22). In descending order, the remaining 12 elements were weighted as follows: cooperation among students and communication patterns among students (14), sociological factors affecting the student (11), grade level to be taught and individual differences among students (9), skill level of student before a unit is begun and maturity of children in the class (7), students' lack of particular knowledge and students' lack of a particular skill (5), students' environment outside school and the reading level of the class (4), and finally, personality factors within the class (3).

*(iv) Teacher characteristics.* Nine elements (10 percent of the original 88) were assigned to this category (Table 16).

Table 16

Elements Assigned to the Teacher Characteristics Category of Influence

| Rank | Element | Recording Frequencies | | | | Weighting |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | TOTAL |
| 1.5 | Teacher's own experience associated with the unit under study | 3 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 43 |
| 1.5 | Teacher's knowledge | 3 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 43 |
| 2 | Flexibility of teach in unit modification | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| 3 | Freedom teacher perceives himself/herself to have to innovate | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| 4 | Ideas realized from other members of the profession | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| 5 | Leadership qualities within the teacher | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 6.5 | Teacher's own set of values | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 6.5 | Teacher's interest in proposed unit | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 7 | University courses the teacher has completed | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Totals | 8 | 7 | 17 | 32 | 116 |

The nine elements were recorded by the respondents 32 times and were assigned an aggregate weighting of 116. The large-city teachers were responsible for 17 (over 50 percent) of the recordings while rural teachers recorded elements in this category 8 times and the small-city teachers 7 times. The teacher's prior experience associated with the unit under consideration and the teacher's knowledge of the subject were each assigned a weighting factor of 43, well above the remaining seven elements. These weightings in descending order were: flexibility of the teacher in unit modification (7), freedom for the teacher to innovate (6), ideas gleaned from other teachers (5), leadership qualities within the teacher (4), the teacher's own set of values and the teacher's interest in the proposed unit (3), and, finally, university courses completed by the teacher (2).

*(v) Instructional procedures.* Twelve elements (14 percent of the original 88) were assigned to this category; they were recorded by the respondents 30 times and were assigned an aggregate weighting of 92 (Table 17). The rural teachers recorded elements belonging to this category 12 times, the small-city teachers 10 times, and the large-city teachers recorded elements categorized as instructional procedures a total of 8 times. The values for the weighting factor decreased gradually from 18 to 1. Elements were assigned the following weightings: ways and means to motivate (18), size of class (16), opportunities for students to have actual experiences (11), procedures to be used and sequencing of activities (9), types of opportunities for students and

Table 17

Elements Assigned to the Instructional Procedures Category of Influence

| Rank | Element | Assignment Frequencies | | | | Weighting TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | |
| 1 | Ways and means to motivate; openers | 0 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 18 |
| 2 | Size of class in relation to plan | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 16 |
| 3 | Opportunity for actual experience | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 11 |
| 4.5 | Procedures to be used | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 9 |
| 4.5 | Sequencing of activities | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 |
| 5.5 | Types of learning opportunities for students | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| 5.5 | Grouping techniques for effective interaction | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | New instructional techniques | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 7.5 | Provision of equal opportunities for children | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 7.5 | Justice in terms of fair proportion of attention to each child | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 8 | Opportunity to integrate activities | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 9 | Opportunity to develop value issues | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Totals | 12 | 10 | 8 | 30 | 92 |

grouping techniques (6), new instructional techniques (5), provision of equal opportunities for children and justice in terms of a fair proportion of teacher-time for each child in the class (4), opportunity to integrate activities (3), and the opportunity to develop value issues (1).

*(vi) Evaluation.* Four elements (5 percent of the original 88) were assigned to this category; they were recorded by the respondents 13 times and were assigned an aggregate weighting of 38 (Table 18). The rural teachers were responsible for six of the recordings; large-city teachers made four of the recordings and small-city teachers were responsible for three. Evaluation to be performed by the teachers (weighting of 30) ranked very much higher than the remaining three elements: reporting procedures (3), post-testing (3), and evaluation to be performed by students (2).

Table 18

Elements Assigned to the Evaluation Category of Influence

| Rank | Element | Assignment Frequencies | | | | Weighting TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | |
| 1 | Evaluation to be performed by teacher | 3 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 30 |
| 2.5 | Reporting procedures | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 2.5 | Post-testing | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | Evaluation to be performed by students | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Totals | 6 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 38 |

*Uncategorized elements.* Fourteen elements (16 percent of the original group of 88) recorded by the respondents were not assigned to a specific category because the criterion level of selection was not reached (Table 19). The following elements (together with their weighting factors) were uncategorized: relevancy (20), time for planning (10), individual rights of children (9), scheduling facilities for student use and in-service (6), pre-testing and discussions with adults in

Table 19

Elements Which Remained Uncategorized

| Rank | Element | Assignment Frequencies | | | | Weighting TOTALS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural Subgroup | Small City Subgroup | Large City Subgroup | Total | |
| 1 | Relevancy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 22 |
| 2 | Time for planning | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| 3 | Individual rights of students | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| 4 | Scheduling facilities for student use | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| 5 | Inservice | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | Pre-testing | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| 7 | Discussions with adults in professions other than teaching | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 8 | Climate of the community | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 9 | Climate within the school | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 10 | Enjoyment for children | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 11 | Ability to locate information | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 12 | Local factors | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 13 | Student suggestions | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 14 | Demands made by the community upon teacher and school | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Totals | 6 | 9 | 9 | 24 | 82 |

professions other than teaching (5), climate of the community and of the school (4), enjoyment for children and ability to locate information (3), local factors and student suggestions (2), and demands made upon the teacher and the school by the community (1).

*Summary of the Analysis*

A summary of the categorization of the generated elements which influence teachers in the curricular decision making process has been presented in Table 20.

Table 20

Summary of the Categorization of the Elements Which Influence Teachers' Curricular Decisions

| | Category of Influence | Number of Elements | Percent of 88 | Assignment Frequency by Teachers in Sample | Total Weighting Factor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Instructional Resources | 18 | 20 | 95 | 310 |
| 2 | Curriculum Elements | 15 | 17 | 68 | 278 |
| 3 | Student Characteristics | 16 | 18 | 58 | 217 |
| 4 | Teacher Characteristics | 9 | 10 | 32 | 116 |
| 5 | Instructional Procedures | 12 | 14 | 30 | 92 |
| 6 | Evaluation | 4 | 5 | 13 | 38 |
| | Sub-Totals | 74 | 84 | 296 | 1,051 |
| 7 | Uncategorized Elements | 14 | 16 | 24 | 82 |
| | Totals | 88 | 100 | 320 | 1,133 |

Instructional resources were perceived to be influential by teachers who were developing curricular plans. Curricular elements ranked next in influence. Student characteristics influenced the respondents to the third highest extent. Teacher characteristics and instructional procedures were ranked fourth and fifth respectively. The category of elements which influenced the respondents least was that of evaluation. Fourteen uncategorized elements accounted for 16 percent of the 88 elements that were subjected to categorization procedures.

Teachers' ranking of the postulated elements revealed that learner characteristics influenced teachers' curricular decisions most. Certain conditions associated with the school appeared to influence teachers more than others. The most influential elements were: access to instructional materials, the climate of the school, funds for instructional materials, and activities, and scheduling procedures. The curriculum handbook was reported to influence teachers to some extent.

In the next chapter, the analysis of teacher assessment of curricular decision making has been presented.

## Chapter 7

## ANALYSIS OF TEACHER ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULAR DECISION MAKING

### *Introduction*

In this chapter, teacher assessments of six specific aspects of the curriculum handbook for social studies in elementary schools in Alberta, *Experiences in Decision Making*, and teacher ranking of four components in the curricular decision making process have been analyzed.

### *Teacher Assessment of the Social Studies Handbook*

A response pattern was considered consistent in a subgroup if a minimum of six teachers indicated responses in any one of three adjacent conditions.

*Nature of the handbook.* Responses from the three subgroups were consistent (Table 21). Five teachers indicated that the curriculum offered adequate guidelines for them while 14 teachers reported that *Experiences in Decision Making* served only as a point of departure in the development of curricular plans. Two teachers rated the curriculum as vague and very non-directive.

*Explanation of the valuing process.* Responses from teachers in the rural and small-city subgroups met the criterion level of

Table 21

Opinions About the Nature of *Experiences in Decision Making*

| | NUMBER | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural N=7 | Small City N=7 | Large City N=7 | Totals N=21 | Rural % | Small City % | Large City % | Totals % |
| How do you view the nature of *Experiences in Decision Making*? Check one response only. | | | | | | | | |
| a. The curriculum is too prescriptive. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| b. The curriculum offers adequate guidelines for the development of curricular plans. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 43 | 14 | 24 |
| c. The curriculum serves only as a point in departure in developing my own curricular plans. | 5 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 71 | 57 | 71 | 67 |
| d. The curriculum offers inadequate guidelines for the development of curricular plans. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| e. The curriculum is vague and very non-directive. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 9 |
| Totals | 7 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

consistency (Table 22). In these groups, four teachers reported that the explanation was specific enough to be used as the basis for curricular decision making with slight modification, five teachers indicated that the explanation was in need of considerable modification in order to meet instructional needs, and five teachers viewed the explanation as being too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive modification.

The response pattern of the large-city teachers was bi-modal. Three teachers found the explanation to be specific enough to be used as a basis for curricular decision making; four teachers rated the explanation as vague and confusing, or too general to be used as the basis for the development of curricular plans.

Table 22

Opinions About the Explanation of the Valuing Process as Presented in *Experiences in Decision Making*

| | NUMBER | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural N=7 | Small City N=7 | Large City N=7 | Totals N=21 | Rural % | Small City % | Large City % | Totals % |
| How do you view the explanation of the *valuing process* as it is presented in A. on pages 9 and 10 of the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*? Check one response only. | | | | | | | | |
| a. Too restrictive; does not allow for elaboration or further specification. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| b. Specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making with slight modification and/or further specification. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 14 | 43 | 43 | 33 |
| c. General; in need for considerable elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children. | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 43 | 28.5 | 0 | 24 |
| d. Too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children. | 3 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 43 | 28.5 | 43 | 38 |
| e. Vague and confusing; consequently I construct and use objectives which differ from those stated in *Experiences in Decision Making*. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 5 |
| Totals | 7 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

*Explanation of the affective objectives.* The responses of teachers in all three subgroups were consistent (Table 23). Five teachers found the explanation to be specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making, seven teachers indicated the explanation was general and therefore in need of modification if used as the basis of curricular decision making, and seven teachers reported that the explanation was too general to be used as the basis of the development of curricular plans. Two teachers found the explanation vague and confusing.

Table 23

Opinions About the Explanation of Affective Objectives as Presented in *Experiences in Decision Making*

| | NUMBER | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural N=7 | Small City N=7 | Large City N=7 | Totals N=21 | Rural % | Small City % | Large City % | Totals % |
| How do you view the explanation of *affective objectives* as it is presented in B. on pages 10 and 11 of the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*? Check one response only. | | | | | | | | |
| a. Too restrictive; does not allow for elaboration or further specification. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| b. Specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making with slight modification and/or further specification. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 14 | 28.5 | 29 | 24 |
| c. General; in need for considerable elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 29 | 43 | 29 | 33 |
| d. Too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children. | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 43 | 28.5 | 29 | 33 |
| e. Vague and confusing; consequently I construct and use objectives which differ from those stated in *Experiences in Decision Making*. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 0 | 14 | 9 |
| Totals | 7 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

*Explanation of cognitive objectives.* Responses on this item were consistent in the case of all three subgroups (Table 24). Thirteen teachers deemed the explanation to be specific enough to serve as the basis for curricular decision making, five viewed the explanation as general and in need of modification in order to meet the instructional needs of children, and three teachers found the explanation to be too general to be used as the basis for the development of curricular plans.

Table 24

Opinions About the Explanation of Cognitive Objectives
As Presented in *Experiences in Decision Making*

| | NUMBER | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural N=7 | Small City N=7 | Large City N=7 | Totals N=21 | Rural % | Small City % | Large City % | Totals % |
| How do you view the explanation of *cognitive objectives* as it is presented in C. on pages 11 and 12 of the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*? Check one response only. | | | | | | | | |
| a. Too restrictive; does not allow for elaboration or further specification. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| b. Specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making with slight modification and/or further specification. | 6 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 86 | 43 | 57 | 62 |
| c. General; in need for considerable elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 43 | 14 | 24 |
| d. Too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 14 | 29 | 14 |
| e. Vague and confusing; consequently I construct and use objectives which differ from those stated in *Experiences in Decision Making*. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 7 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

*Extent of teacher responsibility.* Responses from the three subgroups were consistent and very similar (Table 25). One teacher reported that the responsibility was too great to be assumed by teachers, twelve teachers found the responsibility to be considerable but challenging, and eight teachers indicated that the responsibility was no greater for social studies than for any other course.

*Effects upon teacher curricular decision making.* Again, the responses met the criterion level for consistency (Table 26). Six teachers indicated that they had sought assistance in the development

Table 25

Opinions About Extent of Responsibility Placed on Teachers
By *Experiences in Decision Making*

| | NUMBER | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural N=7 | Small City N=7 | Large City N=7 | Totals N=21 | Rural % | Small City % | Large City % | Totals % |
| How do you view the extent to which *Experiences in Decision Making* places the responsibility for making curricular decisions upon you as a user of the program? Check one response only. | | | | | | | | |
| a. I feel the responsibility is too great. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| b. I feel the responsibility is considerable but challenging. | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 57 | 57 | 57 | 57 |
| c. I feel the responsibility is no greater than it is for the utilization of any other curriculum. | 2 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 29 | 43 | 43 | 38 |
| d. I feel the responsibility is not as great as it is for the utilization of a more prescriptive curriculum. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| e. I feel I cannot assess the extent of responsibility at this time. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 7 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Table 26

Effects of *Experiences in Decision Making* on
Teachers' Curricular Decision Making

| | NUMBER | | | | PERCENTAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural N=7 | Small City N=7 | Large City N=7 | Totals N=21 | Rural % | Small City % | Large City % | Totals % |
| What effect has the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*, had upon the preparation of your own curricular plans? Check one response only. | | | | | | | | |
| a. It has encouraged me to seek some assistance in order to attempt the development of my own curricular plans. | 4 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 57 | 0 | 29 | 29 |
| b. It has caused me to modify old curricular plans in order to meet the objectives of the new curriculum. | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 29 | 57 | 14 | 33 |
| c. It has caused me to realize that my old curricular plans are inadequate in the light of the expressed objectives of *Experiences in Decision Making* and, consequently, I am in the process of attempting to develop appropriate plans. | 0 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 43 | 57 | 33 |
| d. It has drawn me into the task of curricular decision making which is an activity I am really not prepared to undertake at this time. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| e. It has not altered my curricular planning activity; I continue to use my old plans without modifying them in order to meet the objectives which are stated in the new curriculum. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 7 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

of curricular plans based upon *Experiences in Decision Making*. Seven teachers reported that they had modified old curricular plans in order to meet the objectives of *Experiences in Decision Making*. Seven teachers reported that the handbook had helped them to recognize the inadequacy of their old plans and they subsequently attempted to develop appropriate plans. One teacher reported that she had been drawn into the task of curricular decision making before she was fully prepared to undertake the responsibility.

*Teacher Ranking of Components in the Curricular Decision Making Process*

A response pattern was considered consistent in a subgroup if a minimum of six teachers indicated responses in one of three adjacent categories. If this criterion level was met within a subgroup, the mean ranking of importance was considered to be representative of that subgroup's collective assessment.

*Congruence with philosophy of the handbook.* Three congruencies of teacher assessment were considered: the valuing process, the affective objectives, and the cognitive objectives, as they are defined in *Experiences in Decision Making* (Table 27).

Responses to each of the three queries were consistent. The mean score of importance ascribed to personal understanding of the valuing process was 3.7 in each subgroup. One rural teacher indicated minimal importance and one large-city teacher indicated slight importance attached to personal knowledge of the valuing process.

Table 27

Importance of the Teacher's Personal Understanding of the Valuing Process and the Affective and Cognitive Objectives by Subgroup and Total Sample

| | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total |
| 1. In order to develop curricular plans based upon the broad goals provided in *Experiences in Decision Making*, of what importance is your own personal understanding of: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. the valuing process as it is defined in the handbook. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 29 | 38 | 24 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 |
| b. the affective objectives as they are defined in the handbook. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 43 | 43 | 9 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 3.6 |
| c. the cognitive objectives as they are defined in the handbook. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 71 | 5 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.8 |

The mean scores of importance ascribed to personal understanding of the affective objectives were 3.7 for the rural subgroup, 3.6 for the small-city subgroup, and 3.4 for the large-city subgroup in which one teacher attached slight importance to this component.

The mean scores of importance ascribed to personal understanding of the cognitive objectives were 4.0 (rural), 3.6 (small-city), and 3.9 (large-city).

Respondents indicated that their personal knowledge of the valuing process, affective objectives, and cognitive objectives as defined in *Experiences in Decision Making* was, on the average, of moderate importance to them.

*Provision for children's needs.* All responses were consistent (Table 28). The importance ascribed to the provision for the knowledge needs of children was lowest in the case of the large-city subgroup of teachers (3.7). The mean for the total sample was 4.0. The three subgroups attributed a level approaching great importance to the provision for social and personal needs of children. The large-city teachers assigned a slightly lower degree of importance (3.9) to the provision for children's skill needs.

*Selection of appropriate objectives.* These responses were also consistent (Table 29). The rural and small-city respondents assigned considerable importance (4.0 and 4.1 respectively) to the selection of appropriate knowledge objectives while the large-city subgroup mean was 3.7. The large-city treachers attributed considerable importance

Table 28

Importance of Providing for Knowledge, Social and Personal, and Skill Needs of Children by Subgroup and Total Sample

| | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total |
| In the development of curricular plans based upon *Experiences in Decision Making*, of what importance to you is your provision for the following needs of children: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. their knowledge needs. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 57 | 24 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 3.7 | 4.0 |
| b. their social and personal needs. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 52 | 43 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.4 |
| c. their skill needs. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 71 | 19 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 3.9 | 4.1 |

Table 29

Importance of the Selection of Appropriate Objectives
By Subgroup and Total Sample

| | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total |
| In the development of curricular plans based upon *Experiences in Decision Making*, of what importance to you is your selection of appropriate objectives to meet the following needs of children: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. their knowledge needs. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 57 | 19 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 4.0 |
| b. their social and personal needs. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 38 | 43 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.2 |
| c. their skill needs. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 57 | 24 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.0 |

(4.6) to the selection of appropriate social and personal objectives while the small-city and rural teachers assigned a mean importance of 4.1 and 4.0 respectively to this curricular decision. The rural teachers ascribed the least importance to the provision for the skill needs of children (3.7). Small-city and large-city means were 4.1 and 4.3 respectively. The respondents attached, overall, considerable importance to the task of selecting appropriate objectives to meet the needs of children.

*Concepts of curricular design.* All responses given by the rural and small-city teachers were consistent (Table 30). In three of seven instances, the response patterns of the large-city teachers were inconsistent. The total sample mean of importance ascribed to the amount of content was 3.1 (moderate). The lowest value was assigned by the rural teachers (2.9) while small-city and large-city teachers assigned mean values of 3.1 and 3.3 respectively. Responses in all cases were consistent.

Moderate importance (3.1) was ascribed by the total sample to the order in which content is presented. The mean values of 3.4, 3.1, and 2.9 were consistently assigned by the teachers in each subgroup.

The rural and small-city subgroup means for the importance of relationships between and among areas of study were almost identical (3.7 and 3.6 respectively). The response patterns were consistent. On the other hand, the response pattern on this item was scattered in the large-city subgroup. The mean of 3.3 was, therefore, not considered to be representative of the opinions expressed by this group.

Table 30

Importance of Components in the Decision Making Process By Subgroup and Total Sample

| | Rural N = 7 | | | | | Small City N = 7 | | | | | Large City N = 7 | | | | | Total by Category of Importance N = 21 | | | | | Percentage | | | | | Mean | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 | Rural | Small City | Large City | Total |
| In the development of curricular plans based upon *Experiences in Decision Making*, of what importance to you is each of the following considerations: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. the amount of content. | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 52 | 24 | 5 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.1 |
| b. the order in which material is presented. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 71 | 24 | 0 | 3.4 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 3.1 |
| c. the relationship of one area of study with another (social studies with art, science, mathematics, etc.). | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 10 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 33 | 48 | 9 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 3.5 |
| d. the chance for children to role play and interact with each other in a variety of ways. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 29 | 38 | 24 | 3.1 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.5 |
| e. the availability of instructional materials (books, films, equipment, etc.). | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 14 | 43 | 38 | 4.4 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| f. checking up on progress *during* the unit or the time in which the curricular plan will be implemented. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 11 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 29 | 52 | 5 | 3.1 | 3.9 | 3.1 | 3.4 |
| g. checking up on progress *at the end* of the unit or at the *conclusion* of the implementation of the curricular plan. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 11 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 29 | 52 | 9 | 4.3 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 3.7 |

The rural and small-city subgroup means for the importance of role-playing and interaction were 3.1 (moderate) and 3.9 (considerable). The responses were consistent. The large-city teachers' responses formed a scattered pattern which again resulted in an unrepresentative mean.

The response patterns for all three subgroups were consistent when the importance of available instructional materials was considered. The ascribed values for each subgroup were: rural - 4.4 (highest), small-city - 3.9 (lowest), and large-city - 4.0. The mean for the total sample was 4.1, the highest assignment of importance in the seven components.

The rural teachers assigned moderate importance (3.1) to checking up on progress during the development of a unit; the small-city teachers assigned considerable importance (3.9) to this component of the curricular decision making process. The responses of both subgroups were consistent while the large-city teachers' response pattern was bi-modal. Two teachers attached minimal importance to the formative evaluation component while five teachers considered this function to be of considerable importance.

Responses of the teachers in all three subgroups were consistent in their assignments of importance to checking up on progress at the end of a unit. The rural teachers ascribed the greatest degree of importance to this element (4.3) while the small-city teachers and the large-city teachers assigned mean values of 3.7 and 3.0 respectively.

*Summary of the Analysis*

In this chapter, the assessment by teachers of the social studies handbook and teacher rankings of components of the curricular decision making process have been analyzed.

Most teachers reported that the handbook served as a point of departure in the development of curricular plans. Some teachers indicated that explanations of the valuing process and of affective and cognitive objectives were in need of clarification and elaboration if they were to be used as the basis for curricular decision making. Twenty teachers indicated that the responsibility placed upon them by the handbook was considerable and challenging but no more than for other curricula. Responses also indicated that the curriculum handbook had caused most teachers to alter their curricular decision making activities in order to meet the goals of the program.

Teachers attached considerable importance to the need to interpret the philosophy of the curriculum as the developers intended. Considerable importance was attributed to the provision for children's needs and the selection of appropriate objectives to meet those needs. Somewhat less importance was ascribed by teachers to concepts of curriculum design but moderate to considerable concern was expressed for all seven concepts. The most important aspect perceived by teachers in the process of curricular decision making was the acquisition of appropriate instructional materials; this concern took priority over summative evaluation, integration, providing for pupil interaction, and formative evaluation. Scope and sequence in curriculum design were of

least important to the teachers who participated in this study.

In the next chapter, the analysis of curricular plans has been presented.

## Chapter 8

## ANALYSIS OF CURRICULAR PLANS

### *Introduction*

Twenty-one curricular plans were analyzed. There were three different types of plans: (1) nine respondents supplied a written plan which they had developed for their own specific purposes; (2) eight respondents supplied a copy of a model curricular plan to which they had appended a description of specific modifications made to suit the needs of particular students; and (3) the remaining four respondents agreed to participate in an unstructured taped interview during which they shared their ideas about curricular planning for their own classes. The texts of these interviews were transcribed and prepared for content analysis along with the texts of the written plans.

### *Categorization of Content Units*

The print-out from the *Alphabetic Sort and Frequency Count* analysis was examined by three judges consisting of an upper elementary teacher, a graduate student in elementary education, and a professor of elementary education. Their task involved the assignment of each listed content unit to one of six categories. These categories corresponded exactly with the six categories into which the influential elements generated by the teacher respondents had been assigned by a panel of ten other judges. These categories were as follows:

(1) instructional resources;

(2) curriculum elements;

(3) student characteristics;

(4) teacher characteristics;

(5) instructional procedures; and

(6) evaluation.

The category, curriculum elements, was subdivided into four discrete aspects in an attempt to isolate the element or groups of elements which accounted for the greatest proportion of content in this particular category. The subdivisions were as follows:

(1) cognitive (content or knowledge) aspects;

(2) affective (social and personal) aspects;

(3) the valuing process as described in *Experiences in Decision Making*; and

(4) design aspects such as scope, sequence, and the statement of objectives.

A subscore was generated for each of the four subcategories listed above. These subscores were totalled for the curriculm elements category so that comparisons could be made to the other five categories of content.

Content units for which all judges could not reach consensus were assigned to a residual list of uncategorized content.

*System 1 curricular plans.* The fourteen plans in this group were prepared by teachers whose belief systems were deemed to be concrete (Table 31). They represented 67 percent of the total and

Table 31

Frequencies and Percentages of Content Units in the Curricular Plans of System 1 Teachers

| Curricular Plan | Word Total | Instructional Resources | | CURRICULUM ELEMENTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Cognitive Aspects (Content) | | Affective Aspects (Social, Personal) | | Valuing Process (Values) | | Design (Curriculum, Constructs) | | TOTAL | | Student Characteristics & Emphasis | | Teacher Characteristics & Emphasis | | Instructional Procedures & Activities | | Evaluation Activities | | Residual List of Unstereotyped Words | | |
| | N | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | % |
| 01 | 70 | 2 | 3 | 21 | 30 | 28 | 40 | 12 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 61 | 87 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 100 |
| 02 | 297 | 13 | 4 | 186 | 63 | 9 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 209 | 71 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 29 | 10 | 100 |
| 05 | 407 | 11 | 3 | 208 | 51 | 43 | 11 | 14 | 3 | 16 | 4 | 281 | 69 | 28 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 44 | 11 | 8 | 2 | 30 | 7 | 100 |
| 04 | 275 | 25 | 9 | 148 | 54 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 160 | 58 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 55 | 20 | 7 | 3 | 17 | 6 | 100 |
| 06 | 56 | 2 | 4 | 30 | 54 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 10 | 38 | 68 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 100 |
| 07 | 244 | 5 | 2 | 96 | 39 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 16 | 7 | 119 | 49 | 34 | 14 | 15 | 6 | 43 | 18 | 15 | 6 | 13 | 5 | 100 |
| 08 | 519 | 50 | 10 | 159 | 31 | 32 | 6 | 19 | 4 | 42 | 8 | 252 | 49 | 44 | 8 | 12 | 2 | 94 | 18 | 28 | 5 | 39 | 8 | 100 |
| 11 | 89 | 4 | 5 | 22 | 25 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 4 | 5 | 49 | 56 | 11 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 19 | 21 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 100 |
| 12 | 171 | 14 | 8 | 76 | 44 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 23 | 13 | 105 | 61 | 15 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 22 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 100 |
| 13 | 246 | 20 | 8 | 121 | 49 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 12 | 5 | 143 | 58 | 22 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 46 | 19 | 6 | 2.5 | 6 | 2.5 | 100 |
| 14 | 241 | 18 | 7 | 97 | 40 | 14 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 124 | 52 | 23 | 10 | 6 | 2 | 46 | 19 | 10 | 4 | 14 | 6 | 100 |
| 17 | 342 | 12 | 3.5 | 153 | 45 | 15 | 4 | 16 | 5 | 37 | 11 | 221 | 65 | 18 | 5 | 12 | 3.5 | 47 | 14 | 17 | 5 | 15 | 4 | 100 |
| 18 | 24 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 25 | 4 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 50 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 100 |
| 21 | 89 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 | 16 | 4 | 5 | 37 | 42 | 11 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 15 | 17 | 100 |
| Total | 3,070 | 182 | | 1,331 | | 176 | | 103 | | 179 | | 1,789 | | 214 | | 107 | | 479 | | 102 | | 197 | | |
| Mean | 219 | 13 | 5.9 | 95 | 43.4 | 13 | 6.0 | 7 | 3.2 | 13 | 5.9 | 128 | 58.4 | 15 | 6.9 | 8 | 3.7 | 34 | 15.5 | 7 | 3.2 | 14 | 6.4 | 100 |

accounted for 72.3 percent of the analyzed content from the entire sample. Of the total content, 58.4 percent was assigned to *curriculum elements*. The cognitive (content) aspect of curriculum accounted for 43.4 percent of the total content while the affective (social and personal) aspect and design (curriculum constructs) each accounted for 5.9 percent of the content and the valuing process accounted for 3.2 percent. *Instructional procedures* and activities accounted for the second highest proportion of content--15.5 percent. Content associated with *the student* accounted for 6.9 percent of the total. *Instructional resources* ranked fourth at 5.9 percent. Fifth and sixth in proportion were *teacher characteristics* at 3.6 percent and *evaluation* activities at 3.2 percent. A total of 6.4 percent of the content was uncategorized. Words most frequently uncategorized were those having multiple meanings.

*System 2 curricular plans*. The three plans in this group (14 percent of the total) accounted for only 9.8 percent of the analyzed content from the entire sample (Table 32). Of the total content, 53.2 percent was assigned to *curriculum elements*. The cognitive (content) aspect of curriculum accounted for 41.7 percent of the total content while design accounted for 6.5 percent, the affective aspect accounted for 2.9 percent, and the valuing process accounted for 2.2 percent of the content assigned to the curriculum category. *Instructional procedures* accounted for the second highest proportion of content--17.3 percent. Content associated with *student characteristics* accounted for 8.6 percent of the total. *Instructional resources*

Table 32

Frequencies and Percentages of Content Units in the Curricular Plans of System 2 Teachers

| Curricular Plan | Word Total | Instructional Resources | | CURRICULUM ELEMENTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | TOTAL* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Cognitive Aspects (Content) | | Affective Aspects (Social, Personal) | | Valuing Process (Values) | | Design (Curriculum, Constructs) | | TOTAL | | Student Characteristics & Emphasis | | Teacher Characteristics & Emphasis | | Instructional Procedures & Activities | | Evaluation Activities | | Residual List of Uncategorized Words | | |
| | N | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | % |
| 03 | 80 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 31 | 39 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 10 | 16 | 20 | 6 | 7 | 100 |
| 09 | 240 | 15 | 6 | 110 | 46 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 6 | 133 | 56 | 27 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 37 | 15 | 12 | 5 | 11 | 5 | 100 |
| 15 | 97 | 6 | 6 | 54 | 56 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 58 | 70 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 26 | 27 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 100 |
| Total | 417 | 29 | | 175 | | 13 | | 8 | | 26 | | 222 | | 36 | | 10 | | 71 | | 30 | | 19 | | |
| Mean | 139 | 10 | 7.2 | 58 | 41.7 | 4 | 2.9 | 3 | 2.2 | 9 | 6.5 | 74 | 53.2 | 12 | 8.6 | 3 | 2.2 | 24 | 17.3 | 10 | 7.1 | 6 | 4.3 | 100 |

and *evaluation* each accounted for 7.2 percent of the content. Content associated with *teacher characteristics* ranked lowest at 2.2 percent of the total content in curricular plans devised by teachers having System 2 belief patterns. Uncategorized content accounted for 4.3 percent of the content in this group of plans.

*The System 3 curricular plan.* The one curricular plan (5 percent of the total) falling into this category accounted for 3.1 percent of the analyzed content from the entire sample (Table 33). Of the total content, 35 percent was assigned to *teacher characteristics*. Only one other curricular plan contained a greater proportion of content in this category; this was a transcription of an interview. Words associated with *student characteristics* accounted for the second highest proportion of content. *Evaluation* accounted for 17 percent of the content while *instructional procedures* accounted for 12 percent. *Curriculum elements* ranked fifth at 10.0 percent and content associated with *instructional resources* ranked lowest at 2.0 percent. Uncategorized content accounted for 12 percent of the curricular plan submitted by the System 3 subject.

*System 4 curricular plans.* The three plans in this group (14 percent of the total) accounted for 14.9 percent of the analyzed content from the entire sample (Table 34). Of the total 52.9 percent was assigned to *curriculum elements*. The cognitive aspect of curriculum accounted for 29.5 percent of the total content while design accounted for 6.7 percent, affective aspect accounted for 4.8 percent, and the

Table 33

Frequencies and Percentages of Content Units in the Curricular Plans of System 3 Teachers

| Curricular Plan | Word Total | Instructional Resources | | CURRICULUM ELEMENTS: Cognitive Aspects (Content) | | Affective Aspects (Social, Personal) | | Valuing Process (Values) | | Design (Curriculum, Constructs) | | TOTAL | | Student Characteristics & Emphasis | | Teacher Characteristics & Emphasis | | Instructional Procedures & Activities | | Evaluation Activities | | Residual List of Uncategorized Works | | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | % |
| 16 | 130 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 16 | 10 | 28 | 22 | 45 | 35 | 16 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 16 | 12 | 100 |
| Total | 130 | 3 | | 8 | | 1 | | 0 | | 4 | | 16 | | 28 | | 45 | | 16 | | 9 | | 16 | | |
| Mean | 130 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 16 | 10 | 28 | 22 | 45 | 35 | 16 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 16 | 12 | 100 |

Table 34

Frequencies and Percentages of Content Units in the Curricular Plans of System 4 Teachers

| Curricular Plan | Word Total | Instructional Resources | | CURRICULUM ELEMENTS: Cognitive Aspects (Content) | | Affective Aspects (Social, Personal) | | Valuing Process (Values) | | Design (Curriculum, Constructs) | | TOTAL | | Student Characteristics & Emphasis | | Teacher Characteristics & Emphasis | | Instructional Procedures & Activities | | Evaluation Activities | | Residual List of Uncategorized Works | | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | % |
| 10 | 256 | 28 | 11 | 73 | 29 | 12 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 18 | 7 | 110 | 44 | 24 | 9 | 14 | 5 | 50 | 19 | 12 | 5 | 18 | 7 | 100 |
| 19 | 150 | 17 | 11 | 84 | 56 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 6 | 102 | 68 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 18 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 100 |
| 20 | 226 | 19 | 8 | 92 | 41 | 13 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 15 | 7 | 122 | 55 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 3.5 | 52 | 23 | 8 | 3.5 | 12 | 5 | 100 |
| Total | 632 | 64 | | 249 | | 29 | | 13 | | 43 | | 334 | | 33 | | 24 | | 120 | | 24 | | 33 | | |
| Mean | 210 | 21 | 10.0 | 83 | 39.5 | 10 | 4.8 | 4 | 1.9 | 14 | 6.7 | 111 | 52.9 | 11 | 5.2 | 8 | 3.8 | 40 | 19.1 | 8 | 3.8 | 11 | 5.2 | 100 |

valuing process accounted for 1.9 percent of the content assigned to the curriculum category. *Instructional procedures* accounted for the second highest proportion of content--19.1 percent. Content associated with *instructional resources* accounted for 10.0 percent of the total. *Student characteristics* accounted for 5.2 percent of the content while *teacher characteristics* and *evaluation* each ranked fifth in proportion at 3.8 percent. Uncategorized words accounted for 5.2 percent of the content in this group of plans.

*Summary of Analysis*

The most striking differences in content proportion occurred in the single System 3 curricular plan (Table 35). This plan revealed the lowest proportion of content associated with *curriculum elements* (10.0 percent) and *instructional resources* (2.0 percent). On the other hand, this plan revealed the highest proportion of content associated with teacher characteristics (35.0 percent), *student characteristics* (22 percent), and *evaluation* (7 percent).

System 1 curricular plans revealed the highest proportion of content related to *curriculum elements* (58.8 percent) and the lowest proportion of content related to *evaluation* (3.2 percent).

System 2 curricular plans revealed the lowest proportion of content associated with *teacher characteristics*.

System 4 curricular plans revealed the highest proportion of content associated with *instructional procedures* (19.1 percent) and with *instructional resources* (10.0 percent).

Table 35

Proportions of Content in Curricular Plans
by Belief System and Content Category

| Content Category | System I N = 14 % | System II N = 3 % | System III N = 1 % | System III N = 3 % | Total N = 21 % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Curriculum Elements | | | | | |
| Cognitive Aspects | 43.4 | 41.7 | 6.0 | 39.5 | 33 |
| Affective Aspects | 5.9 | 2.9 | 1.0 | 4.8 | 4 |
| Valuing Process | 3.2 | 2.2 | 0 | 1.9 | 2 |
| Design | 6.0 | 6.5 | 3.0 | 6.7 | 5 |
| Total | 58.5 | 53.3 | 10.0 | 52.9 | 44 |
| 2. Instructional Resources | 5.9 | 7.2 | 2.0 | 10.0 | 6 |
| 3. Student Characteristics | 6.9 | 8.6 | 22.0 | 5.2 | 11 |
| 4. Teacher Characteristics | 3.6 | 2.2 | 35.0 | 3.8 | 11 |
| 5. Instructional Procedures | 15.5 | 17.3 | 12.0 | 19.1 | 16 |
| 6. Evaluation | 3.2 | 7.1 | 7.0 | 3.8 | 5 |
| 7. Residual List of Uncategorized Content | 6.4 | 4.3 | 12.0 | 5.2 | 7 |
| Totals | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100 |

Overall total revealed that 44 percent of the content in all the curricular plans was assigned to the *curriculum elements* category. Content associated with *instructional procedures* accounted for 16 percent of the total. Content related to *student characteristics* and *teacher characteristics* each accounted for 11 percent of the content while *instructional resources* netted 6 percent of the total. The

lowest proportion was *evaluation* which accounted for 5 percent of the content in all 21 plans. Seven percent of all content units were uncategorized.

# Chapter 9

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### *Introduction*

The discussion of the findings is presented in four parts. The first three sections relate to each of the three research problems. The chapter concludes with a summary of the discussion.

### Discussion of Curricular Determinants

The first research problem was concerned with the discovery of elements which influence teachers when they are involved in the curricular decision making process. The problem consisted of three specific questions.

1.1 What degree of influence do teachers attribute to such elements as the learner, the school, and the authorized provincial curriculum handbook when they attempt to develop curricular plans?

1.2 What elements do teachers perceive as the most important influences upon their curricular decisions?

1.3 What relationship exists between the importance ascribed by teachers to the elements described in the literature and the elements they identified themselves?

*1.1 Influence of Postulated Elements*

The respondents were asked to assess three groups of elements: learner characteristics, conditions within the school, and the curriculum handbook.

*Learner characteristics.* Least importance was assigned to the talents of learners as an element of influence upon curricular decision making. One teacher, classified as having belief system 3, indicated that talents were of very great importance to him in the planning of curricular units. The same teacher indicated that the social and personal needs of the child were of some importance while all other respondents attached considerable importance to this element. Apart from these differences, the responses of the 21 teachers provided conclusive support for the importance of the five elements related to learner characteristics--need for knowledge, social and personal needs, skill needs, interests, and talents. With the one exception (access to necessary instructional materials), the importance assigned to learner characteristics as influences upon the curricular decision making process was higher than for those elements associated with conditions in the school or the curriculum handbook.

*Conditions within the school.* Of the eleven elements postulated for this category of influence upon curricular decision making, five were assigned a mean score of 3.0 (some importance) to 3.6 (approaching considerable importance). This group of elements consisted of: access to necessary instructional materials (3.6); the cooperative and friendly

spirit in the school (3.4); funds for instructional materials and projects (3.3); scheduling procedures (3.2); and the size of the instructional unit (3.0). Least importance was assigned to assistance of a paraprofessional nature (2.0). Because the rural teachers in particular indicated that they rarely experienced this kind of experience, they were not very much concerned about this element. Of little importance to the sample of teachers were types of furnishings, facilities and instructional space, and reporting procedures. The greatest variation in responses occurred in conjunction with time for planning during regular school hours. The bimodal response pattern of the teachers in the rural and small-city subgroups reflected the existing policy within the different school jurisdictions. The rural teachers had no direct policy related to preparation time. To some, this element was of concern because individual schools made intra-staff arrangements to provide each teacher with some preparation time. The teachers for whom no provisions were made may not have been so concerned because planning time was something they did not think possible to achieve for themselves. The small-city teachers were entitled to some planning time each week. They were of divided opinion respecting adequacy of the time allotted. Planning time had been removed from the large-city teachers' contract. Despite the scattered response, the mean response of 3.3 indicated teacher concern that planning time had been deleted from regular school hours.

There seemed to be some difference reported by teachers between the importance of class size and type of facility. This difference wa

associated with the age of teachers. The oldest subgroup (50-64 years) was most concerned about class size. The same group was least concerned about the kind of facility in which they had to instruct. Teachers in this age group stated that they were accustomed to teaching in closed classrooms.

Teachers who had more than four years of post secondary education assigned more importance to the type of space in which they teach than teachers who had less than four years of post secondary education.

Differences appeared to exist among teachers in different belief system subgroups in their attitudes towards the importance of instructional space, access to instructional resources, and paraprofessional assistance. In each case the System 3 teacher was atypical.

*Curriculum handbook.* The responses of teachers in the sample were conclusive with respect to the importance of the handbook in curricular decision making. Small-city teachers assigned moderate importance to this element while the large-city teachers assigned least importance to the handbook as an influence upon their curricular decisions. The small-city teachers reported that they had been encouraged to use *Experiences in Decision Making* exclusively while the large-city teachers had been encouraged to use the handbook as one of many alternatives. The System 3 teacher ascribed very little importance to *Experiences in Decision Making* as an influence in the curriculur decision making process.

*1.2 Influence of Generated Elements*

The respondents identified 88 elements which influence the curricular decision making process. The elements were then categorized by a panel of ten judges. Of the 88 elements, a total of 74 were assigned to one of six influence categories according to the criterion level of 7 assignments out of 10 to a particular category. There were 14 uncategorized elements on the basis of this criterion.

*Instructional resources.* Whereas small-city teachers were responsible for 38 recordings of instructional resources, rural teachers for 32, and large-city teachers for 25, the origin of the elements differed. Six of the 18 elements assigned to this category were common to the rural, small-city, and large-city groups. Two of the elements were common to the rural and small-city subgroups. Six additional items were generated by rural teachers, one by small-city teachers, and three by large-city teachers. These findings are consistent with the degree of concern expressed about the availability (or non-availability) of instructional resources, especially by the rural teachers.

*Curriculum elements.* Six of the elements assigned by the panel of judges to this influence category were common to each of the three subgroups. Four elements were common to the small-city and large-city subgroups. One element was common to rural and large-city teachers. Three additional elements were generated by large-city teachers and one was posited by the small-city subgroup. Awareness of curricular

elements may be heightened in large-city teachers because in-service seminars and workshops have been more numerous and in effect for a longer period of time in the large-city jurisdiction than in the small-city and rural areas where in-service sessions related to social studies have been offered only during the last year. The small-city and rural subgroups of teachers were just becoming aware of the special curricular elements in the recently introduced social studies handbook which was distributed throughout the province of Alberta for general use in the year prior to the one in which this study was conducted.

*Student characteristics.* The small-city subgroup of teachers generated ten of the elements which were assigned to this category. The rural subgroup also generated ten of the elements while the large-city teachers were responsible for seven of the items. This finding was somewhat surprising in the light of a common assumption that the large-city teachers are more likely to have the facilities, expertise, and leadership for individualization than teachers in either of the other two subgroups.

*Teacher characteristics.* Large-city teachers indicated substantially more concern for this category of influence than did teachers in either of the other subgroups. The large-city subgroup generated six elements, the small-city subgroup generated five of the elements, and the rural teachers were responsible for the generation of three items. There was little difference between subgroups in their

estimate of the extent of influence that teacher characteristics have on the curricular decision making process.

*Instructional procedures.* The rural teachers indicated the greatest concern for this category of influence and they generated the greatest number of items (8) which were assigned to the six categories of influence by the judges. Small- and large-city teacher subgroups each generated five items in this category. Two elements were common to the three subgroups. One element was common to the small- and large-city teachers and one was common to the rural and small-city teachers. The rural teachers generated 5 additional elements and one further element was generated by the small-city subgroup. The most concern was expressed by rural teachers whose task of selecting appropriate instructional procedures is complicated by insufficient access to appropriate instructional materials.

*Evaluation.* The element, teacher performed evaluation, was common to all three subgroups. Three additional elements were generated by the rural teachers. This subgroup of teachers verbalized their concern about alternative means by which to evaluate whereas teachers in the small- and large-city subgroups expressed concern only for evaluative measures they would carry out themselves.

*Uncategorized elements.* Fourteen of the 88 elements failed to meet the criterion level of 7 out of 10 assignments to the same category. Most of the disagreement resulted from judges' indecision. They assigned an element to two or more categories and certain elements

seemed to suggest a new category such as "community influences." Elements were maintained in their original form. Clarifications were included if they had been given by the respondents. Consequently, judges found some of the elements confusing or ambiguous. The uncategorized elements have been considered in three groups: those which lent themselves to a category called "community influence," those which needed clarification, and those which the investigator assigned to one of the six categories after seeking clarification from the originators.

The elements related to "community influences" are as follows:

(1) climate of the community;

(2) climate within the school;

(3) local factors; and

(4) demands made by the community upon teacher and school.

The elements which needed clarification are presented below. Clarifying phrases have been enclosed in parentheses and the category into which each element could be placed has been postulated by the investigator.

(1) Individual rights of students (relative to setting instructional objectives): an element in the curriculum category.

(2) In-service (in terms of expertise and knowledge the teacher would obtain and subsequently bring to the task of curricular decision making): an element in the teacher characteristics category.

(3) Pretesting (in terms of assessing the child's level in order to determine appropriate objectives for him): an element in the evaluation category.

(4) Discussions with adults in professions other than teaching (in order to obtain outside, impartial opinions about, as well as alternatives to, current instructional practices): an element in the instructional resource category.

(5) Enjoyment for children (in terms of an objective or outcome): an element in the curriculum category.

(6) Ability to locate information (on the part of the child--an objective): an element in the curriculum category.

(7) Student suggestions (in terms of "what" to study and "why"): an element in the curriculum category.

The elements which the investigator placed into categories without clarification were as follows:

(1) relevancy: curriculum;

(2) time for planning: instructional resource; and

(3) scheduling facilities for student use: instructional procedure.

*1.3 Relationship Between Postulated and Generated Elements*

Seventeen elements were postulated (Table 36). Of these, 5 were related to the needs of the child, 11 were related to conditions within the school, and the seventeenth element was the curriculum handbook. The respondents generated 88 elements which influence them when they make curricular decisions. Of these elements, 74 were assigned to six categories. Fourteen elements remained uncategorized because they failed to meet the criterion level. In Table 36 the

## Table 36

## Generated Elements Compared to Postulated Elements

| Postulated Elements | Mean Importance | Matched Generated Elements | Weighting |
|---|---|---|---|
| the learner's need for knowledge | 3.9 | student's lack of particular knowledge | 5 |
| | | previous experience of the student | 22 |
| | | generalizations to be comprehended | 39 |
| the learner's personal and social needs | 4.2 | sociological factors related to the student | 11 |
| | | student's environment outside the school | 4 |
| the learner's need for skills | 4.2 | skill level of the student before unit is begun | 7 |
| | | reading level of the class | 4 |
| | | student's lack of a particular skill | 5 |
| | | skill development in students | 39 |
| the learner's interests | 4.1 | student interest in topic | 45 |
| the learner's talents | 3.6 | ability of student | 33 |
| the number of students to be instructed at one time | 3.0 | size of class in relation to plan | 16 |
| the type of space in which teaching is to take place | 2.7 | space in which to arrange displays | 3 |
| | | availability of suitable space in which to work | 8 |
| the type of facility in which teaching is to take place | 2.9 | classroom facilities such as open space | 4 |
| the type of furnishings, versatility, physical features | 2.5 | *no comparable element generated* | - |
| timetabling, scheduling, and other time limitations | 3.2 | scheduling facilities for student use | 6 |
| reporting procedures, record keeping, policies | 2.6 | reporting procedures | 3 |
| the cooperative and friendly spirit of the school | 3.4 | climate within the school | 4 |
| time during regular school hours for planning | 2.7 | time for planning | 10 |
| funds for instructional resources, field trips | 3.3 | economics; finances for materials | 1 |
| | | field trips | 11 |
| access to necessary instructional materials | 3.6 | availability of instructional resources | 69 |
| | | access to library facilities | 69 |
| | | relevant filmstrips and films | 69 |
| | | availability of resource personnel in the community | 15 |
| | | resources to be found within the community | 15 |
| | | appropriate reference books | 12 |
| | | audio-visual aides | 4 |
| assistance in the form of teacher aides, secretarial services, technicians | 2.0 | *no comparable element generated* | - |
| the social studies handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making* | 3.0 | the curriculum guide | 28 |

postulated elements have been listed together with companion elements which were generated by the respondents.

*Importance of learner characteristics.* Each of the five postulated characteristics, the learner's need for knowledge, personal skills, and the learner's interests and talents were matched by at least one element generated by the teacher respondents. It would appear that the postulated elements were validated through the occurrence of matching elements which were generated by the respondents. The elements were assigned to the *student characteristics* and *curriculum elements* categories.

*Importance of conditions within the school.* Nine of the eleven postulated elements were matched by at least one element generated by the respondents. In the case of *type of furnishing* and *paraprofessional assistance*, no comparable elements were generated. These elements were assigned the lowest mean importance by the respondents--2.5 and 2.0 respectively. The remaining nine postulated elements appear to be valid because each was matched by at least one element generated by the respondents. Four of the elements were placed in the *instructional* and *resources* category, one element was placed in each of the *evaluation* and *instructional procedures* categories, and three elements, although generated by the teachers, were uncategorized by the panel of judges.

*Importance of the handbook.* This element was matched by a comparable element generated by the respondents. A curriculum

category, which was generated by the panel of judges, contained fifteen elements and ranked second as a category of influence in the curricular decision making process.

## Discussion of Curricular Decision Making

The second research problem involved the assessment of teachers' opinions about a provincially authorized curriculum and decision making procedures which result in curricular plans. Three specific questions were addressed to the problem.

2.1 What effect has a broadly-stated curriculum such as *Experiences in Decision Making* had upon teachers' curricular decision making activities?

2.2 Of what importance are specific curricular tasks to teachers?

2.3 What are the content constituents of teachers' curricular plans?

### *2.1 Effects of the Handbook*

Only one of the respondents indicated that *Experiences in Decision Making* placed too great a responsibility upon the teacher as a user of the program. This was the only teacher in the entire sample who was instructing three grade levels in a rural setting. Twenty teachers reported that the responsibility was considerable/no greater than the responsibility for curricular decision making in other areas. The net response indicated that the respondents have accepted the

professional responsibility associated with curricular decision making based on the broad goals of the curriculum handbook.

Nineteen respondents adopted a neutral stance in relation to the prescriptive versus non-prescriptive nature of the handbook. They rated *Experiences in Decision Making* as an adequate guideline to, or as a point of departure in, curricular planning.

Respondents expressed more concern about their accommodation of the valuing process and the development of affective objectives than for the formulation of cognitive objectives. This finding was not supported in the content analysis of the curricular plans. The analysis revealed that 41.5 percent of the content aggregate of 21 plans was cognitive in nature (content) while the affective aspect and the valuing process netted 5.2 percent and 2.9 percent of the content aggregate respectively.

The broadly-stated curriculum (*Experiences in Decision Making*) has created change in the approach taken towards the development of curricular plans by the teachers in the sample. Some respondents indicated that they had realized inadequacies in their former plans and they had sought assistance in order to meet new expectations or they had accomplished changes on their own.

*2.2 Importance of Specific Curricular Processes*

Four specific tasks associated with the development of curricular plans were considered in this part of the study.

*Achieving intended outcomes.* Respondents were concerned about

their understanding of the three main concepts of the curriculum handbook--the valuing process, and the affective and cognitive objectives. They indicated that their interpretation of these key concepts should be congruent with the original concepts of the program developers. Only then could the respondents implement *Experiences in Decision Making* as initially intended. The rural teachers, in particular, expressed support for in-service sessions which were aimed at the clarification of intents.

*Providing for the needs of children.* Respondents' concern about the provision for children's *knowledge*, *skill*, and especially, *social and personal* needs, was greater than it was for understanding these concepts. Again this finding was not entirely supported in the analysis of the content. The knowledge need attracted more concern in the plans than either skill or social and personal needs.

*Selection of appropriate objectives.* Respondents' concern about the provision for the needs of children was reiterated in the importance attached to the selection of appropriate objectives to meet the social and personal knowledge, and skill needs of children.

*Other curricular tasks.* Of greatest concern was the acquisition of resources needed for the realization of specific instructional objectives. This finding was consistent with the rank assigned by the teachers in the sample to instructional resources as an influence upon the curricular decision-making process. Summative evaluation ranked second in importance as a curricular task.

Formative evaluation ranked slightly lower. Evaluation ranked sixth in importance as an influence upon the curricular decision making process. Evaluation accounted for 3.9 percent of the content in the curricular plans.

Integration and the provision of opportunities for children to role play and otherwise interact were ranked equally in importance (3.5).

Sequence and scope both were considered by the respondents in terms of low importance. Again, this finding is not consistent with the analysis of content. Sequence was a consideration in the categorization of elements which influence the curricular decision making process and in the analysis of content but the extent of importance was small. Content and its scope, on the other hand, accounted for 33 percent of the content in all the plans and nearly half of the weighting factor assigned by the respondents to the curriculum category of influence upon the curricular decision making process.

*2.3 Curricular Plans*

An attempt was made to analyze the plans in terms of the six categories of elements formulated from 88 items which were named by the respondents and subsequently categorized by a panel of judges. A panel of three judges categorized the alphabetically sorted words and tabulated their frequencies so that proportions of content could be calculated for each category. A content unit was assigned to a category if all three judges reached consensus.

Before a content unit was assigned to the residual list, the judges could peruse the data base for a plan (used in the computerized content analysis) or, subsequently, the plan itself to ascertain context. Words which were obviously ambiguous or of a non-content nature were assigned to the residual list.

*Curriculum elements.* The plans revealed a heavy emphasis upon content in the form of facts, concepts, and generalizations. If a content unit was judged to be informational, it was assigned to *cognitive aspects.* Teachers who were interviewed in lieu of or in addition to presenting a written curricular plan seemed to indicate considerable concern for content despite the fact that other considerations such as affective and valuing concerns had been assigned greater importance at other stages in the data collection.

Content units which represented social, personal, ethnic, or emotional concepts, for example, were assigned to the affective aspects category. Content units which indicated judgements, morals, and choices, for example, were assigned to the valuing process category. Content units which represented the setting of objectives, scope, sequence, integration, for example, were assigned to design. Curriculum concerns accounted for 43.7 percent of the content.

*Instructional procedures.* Content units such as grouping techniques, individualized activities, and teacher-directed learning experiences--show class, tell class--were categorized as instructional procedures. This category of content accounted for the second largest

proportion of content in the curricular plans (16.0 percent).

*Teacher characteristics.* Content units which were related to the values, interests, and abilities of the teacher as well as personal references--I, my class--were categorized as *teacher characteristics* which accounted for 11 percent of the content.

*Student characteristics.* The same percentage of content in the plans was assigned to student characteristics as to teacher characteristics (11 percent). References to the student, class, student interests, abilities, and needs were included in this category of content.

*Instructional resources.* Content units which represented the use or acquisition of instructional resources were assigned to this category which accounted for 6 percent of the total content. Items included, for example, filmstrips, films, field trips, references, and the contributions of resource personnel.

*Evaluation.* A total of 5 percent of the content in all the plans was assigned to the evaluation category. Content units included all references to pre- and post-testing, measurement of progress, comparisons, and contrasts. This category of content accounted for the least proportion of content in the curricular plans.

*Uncategorized content.* The residual list of uncategorized content units comprised 7 percent of the total content.

*Summary.* In Table 37, the ranking of each category has been shown in terms of the proportion of elements and the proportion of content. In addition, the percentages of total weighting and of the total content have been shown for each category.

Table 37

Proportion and Ranking of Generated Elements and Content in Each Category of Influence

| CATEGORY | RANKING | | PERCENTAGE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | As Proportion of Generated Elements | As Proportion Of Total Content | Of Total Weighting (1,333) | Of Total Content (4,249 Words) |
| Instructional Resources | 1 | 5 | 28% | 6% |
| Curriculum Elements | 2 | 1 | 25 | 44 |
| Student Characteristics | 3 | 3.5 | 19 | 11 |
| Teacher Characteristics | 4 | 3.5 | 10 | 11 |
| Instructional Procedures | 5 | 2 | 8 | 16 |
| Evaluation | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| Sub-Total | | | 93% | 93% |
| Uncategorized Elements/Content | | | 7 | 7 |
| TOTAL | | | 100% | 100% |

Striking differences in the proportion of the total weighting factor and the total content occurred in relation to instructional resources and curriculum, and to a lesser extent, student characteristics and instructional procedures. The respondents appeared to consider instructional resources to a greater extent when they reflected upon the curricular decision making process they followed than in the curricular plans they used. Much more evidence of curricular concerns, especially content, appeared in the written documents than in the descriptions of curricular decision making. Concerns for the student captured proportionately more content in the plans than they did in the assessment the respondents made of the curricular decision making process. Instructional procedures accounted for 16 percent of the content in the actual plans while this dimension ranked low in the descriptions of curricular decision making processes provided by the respondents. Evaluation and teacher characteristics occupied the same position in the descriptions as in the plans.

These findings suggest that the teacher's emphasis may change as he proceeds through a curricular decision making sequence. When teachers contemplate the development of a unit, instructional resource availability, curriculum, student characteristics, and teacher characteristics are emphasized. When the contemplation becomes a reality in the form of a curricular plan, the emphases may shift to concern for the curriculum component (especially content) followed by instructional procedures which are probably dependent upon student and teacher characteristics. Evaluation occupies the sixth position.

## Discussion of Teachers' Belief Systems

The third research problem was an inquiry into possible relationships between the belief system of a teacher and various components of the curricular decision making process. The problem was subdivided into three specific questions:

3.1 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief system of a teacher and that teacher's view of the curricular decision making process?

3.2 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief system of a teacher and the elements which teachers perceive as influences on their curricular decisions?

3.3 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief systems of teachers and the content in the curricular plans used by those teachers for instructional purposes?

### *3.1 Teachers' Belief Systems in Relation to the Curricular Decision Making Process*

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the responses given by the sample of teachers to the questions related to the curricular decision making process. Six grouping criteria were used for this purpose: age; sex; years of post secondary education; years of experience in teaching upper elementary social studies; school jurisdiction; and belief systems. A criterion level of one full point between or among the group means of teachers in at least two of the four belief systems and a corresponding standard deviation of less than 1.0 resulted in the consideration of a specific difference.

According to these criteria, only one difference was considered on the basis of sample division by sex. Males ascribed more importance to the role of integration in the curricular decision making process than did females. No differences were considered when the sample was subdivided by age, years of post secondary education, years of experience in teaching fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies, or school jurisdiction.

When the responses were examined on the basis of sample subdivision by belief systems, ten differences were noted on the basis of the two criterion levels. These differences accounted for 91 percent of all differences considered when curricular decision making components were examined in terms of the sample subdivision criteria. These data have been summarized in Table 38.

Table 38

Number of Differences on Sixteen Curricular Decision Making Components Based on Six Sample Subdivision Criteria

| Subdivision Criteria | Number | Percent of Total N = 11 |
|---|---|---|
| Age | 0 | 0 |
| Sex | 1 | 9 |
| Years of Post Secondary Education | 0 | 0 |
| Years of Experience in Teaching Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grade Social Studies | 0 | 0 |
| School Jurisdiction | 0 | 0 |
| Belief System | 10 | 91 |
| Totals | 11 | 100 |

### *3.2 Teachers' Belief Systems in Relation to Elements Which Influence Curricular Decision Making*

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the responses given by the sample of teachers to the questions related to the postulated elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions. Six grouping criteria were again used for this purpose and the same criterion levels were used in order to determine the differences for specific consideration.

According to these criteria, two differences were considered on the basis of subdivision by age, one on the basis of years of post secondary education, and one on the basis of school jurisdiction.

When the responses were considered on the basis of sample subdivision by four belief systems, six differences were identified within acceptable limits of the criterion levels. These differences accounted for 60 percent of all those considered in this part of the analysis. These data have been reported in Table 39.

The teachers who originated the 88 elements which influence curricular decisions were considered in terms of their belief system categories. The elements were tallied according to each of the four belief systems. The results were inspected for elements which were unique to any one belief system. The summary of these data can be found in Table 40.

None of the 88 elements was common to the System 1 group. The three members of the System 2 group each generated the following elements: availability of instructional materials; access to library

Table 39

Number of Differences on Seventeen Postulated Elements Which Influence the Decision Making Process Based on Six Sample Subdivision Criteria

| Subdivision Criteria | Number | Percent of Total N = 10 |
|---|---|---|
| Age | 2 | 20 |
| Sex | 0 | 0 |
| Years of Post Secondary Education | 1 | 10 |
| Years of Experience in Teaching Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grade Social Studies | 0 | 0 |
| School Jurisdiction | 1 | 10 |
| Belief System | 6 | 60 |
| Totals | 10 | 100 |

Table 40

Number of Elements Generated by All Members of Each Belief System Group

| Belief System | Number of Elements Generated By All Members of a Group |
|---|---|
| System 1 (N = 14) | 0 |
| System 2 (N = 3) | 3 |
| System 3 (N = 1) | 16* |
| System 4 (N = 3) | 4 |

*Because there was only one System 3 subject, all response for that individual were recorded. Two elements were unique to this subject alone.

facilities; and filmstrips and films. There was only one representative of the System 3 belief pattern. This teacher generated 16 items, two of which were unique: suitability of instructional materials for children and the degree of abstractness-concreteness in the content to be considered for instructional purposes. Both elements are consistent with the traits associated with pure System 3 individuals. Four elements were generated by each member of the System 4 group. These items were: availability of instructional resources; the curriculum guide; access to library facilities; and filmstrips and films.

*Summary.* The belief systems of the teachers appeared to affect their views concerning the components of the curricular decision making process more often than other demographic characteristics. The belief systems of the respondents also appeared to affect the degree of importance assigned by the teachers to postulated elements which influenced their curricular decisions. These differences did not occur as frequently as in the responses associated with curricular components.

*3.3 Teachers' Belief Systems and Curricular Plans*

Whereas the content in the curricular plans varied from individual to individual, the differences between and among the belief system subgroups were few and minimal in scope.

*Curriculum elements.* The System 3 respondent's taped interview revealed that 10 percent of the content was assigned to the curriculum elements category while the plans used by the respondents from the other three belief systems revealed that 52.9 to 58.4 percent of the

content was assigned to the curriculum elements category.

*Instructional resources.* The plans used by members of the System 4 group contained content related to instructional resources representing 10 percent of the total. The System 3 respondent's taped interview revealed that 2 percent of the content was devoted to the instructional resource category.

*Student and teacher characteristics.* For both of these categories, the plan related by the System 3 representative contained very high proportions of content. Plans from the other three groups contained much smaller proportions of content related to student and teacher characteristics.

*Instructional procedures.* Twelve percent of the content in the plan described by the System 3 teacher was assigned to the instructional procedures category. The proportion of content assigned to this category from the plans used by the representatives of the other three groups ranged upward to 19.1 percent. Differences in the proportions of content assigned to this category were minimal, however.

*Evaluation.* The range in the proportions of content assigned to this category began at 3.2 percent in the plans used by System 1 teachers to 7.1 percent in the plans used by System 2 teachers. Again, the differences were minimal.

*Summary.* The content in the plan related by the System 3 respondent differed on all dimensions with the exception of instructional

procedures and evaluation. Certainly no conclusions can be drawn on the basis of one plan but the profile for this plan was at such variance that further investigation might reveal real and consistent differences such as those which have been pointed out here.

## Summary of the Chapter

Seventy-four elements which affect teachers when they make curricular decisions were placed into six categories by a panel of ten judges. The categories of influence, in their ranked order of importance, are as follows:

(1) instructional resources;

(2) curriculum elements;

(3) student characteristics;

(4) teacher characteristics;

(5) instructional procedures; and

(6) evaluation.

Fifteen of the seventeen influential elements postulated for this study were conceptualized in relation to the learner, conditions within the school, and the curriculum. These were matched by at least one element generated by the teacher respondents themselves. The type of furnishings in a classroom and paraprofessional assistance were ranked lowest in importance of all the postulated elements and were not generated at all by the respondents.

The teacher's handbook for elementary social studies, *Experiences in Decision Making*, has goals and objectives which have been

stated in broad terms. The respondents indicated that this kind of curriculum guide has caused them to change their curricular planning processes to a considerable extent.

The teachers in the sample revealed that they regard providing for children's various needs as the single most important curricular decision making task. The selection of appropriate objectives to meet children's needs and the teacher's personal understanding of the basic concepts in the curriculum were of only slightly less importance to the respondents. In terms of the components of the curricular decision making process, the respondents expressed greatest concern for the acquisition of relevant instructional resources followed by summative evaluation, integration, the provision of interactive activities, formative evaluation, and finally, scope and sequence.

The content in the curricular plans was heavily oriented towards the curriculum dimension which was evident in cognitive, affective, valuing, and design features. Cognitive referents accounted for nearly all the curriculum content. The second largest proportion of content was devoted to instructional procedures. The balance of the content was about equally distributed among student and teacher characteristics, instructional resources, and evaluation.

The belief system of the teacher seemed to be operant in the views held by the respondents in conjunction with several curricular concepts and tasks. There were more differences on these dimensions when the sample had been subdivided on the basis of belief system than when the subdivision had been made on the basis of five other criteria.

Differences were not as pronounced or consistent when the elements which influence teachers in the curricular planning process or the content of the curricular plans were examined. The effect of the teacher's belief system upon the entire curricular decision making process needs to be investigated further. There is some evidence in the findings of this study that the teacher's belief system does make some difference in the way a teacher views the several components comprising the curricular decision making task.

The findings in this study have indicated that teachers in the sample regarded the task of curricular decision making as a professional responsibility. A definite group of influences appeared to be present as the teacher respondents attempted to develop curricular plans. The belief systems of the teachers in the sample seemed to have had some bearing on their attitudes towards certain components of the curricular decision making process and on the nature of the content in the curricular plans which resulted from that process.

# Chapter 10

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Introduction*

The first part of this chapter consists of a summary of the study. The second section presents the conclusions which have been drawn from the findings. A subsequent discussion focuses on the implications the findings in this study may have for curriculum development. In the fourth part of the chapter, recommendations for further research have been presented. The chapter concludes with a statement related to the conceptual framework which served as the basis for the study.

### *Summary of the Study*

The study focused on the role of the classroom teacher in the curriculum development process. Recent emphasis on the professional responsibility teachers have towards the development of curriculum at the classroom level prompted a need for information about ways in which teachers approach the task. Teachers are expected to translate the broad intents of certain curricula such as *Experiences in Decision Making* into instructional activities which meet the needs of particular students in unique situations. This assumption immediately raises some questions for which the research reported in this study attempted to

find answers. What elements influence teachers when they attempt to make curricular decisions? What processes do teachers use when planning curricular units. What comprises the content of unit plans which result from the curricular decision making process?

*The problem.* The study was designed to investigate the role of the classroom teacher in the curricular decision making process. Three research problems were identified as follows:

*1.0 Influences upon curricular decisions.* The first research problem was the discovery of elements which influence teachers when they are involved in the curricular decision making process.

1.1 What degree of influence do teachers attribute to such elements as the learner, the school, and the authorized provincial curriculum handbook when they attempt to develop curricular plans?

1.2 What elements do teachers perceive as the most important influences upon their curricular decisions?

1.3 What relationship exists between the importance ascribed by teachers to the elements described in the litefature and the elements they identified themselves?

*2.0 Components of the curricular decision making process.* The second research problem involved the assessment of teachers' opinions about a provincially authorized curriculum and planning procedures which result in curricular plans.

2.1 What effect has a broadly-stated curriculum such as

*Experiences in Decision Making* had upon teachers' curricular decision making?

2.2 Of what importance are specific curricular tasks to teachers?

2.3 What are the content constituents of teachers' curricular plans?

*3.0 Influence of belief systems upon teachers' curricular decisions.* The third research problem was an inquiry into possible relationships between the belief system of a teacher and various components of the curricular decision making process.

3.1 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief system of a teacher and that teacher's view of the curricular decision making process?

3.2 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief system of a teacher and the elements which teachers perceive to influence their curricular decisions?

3.3 Is there evidence that a relationship exists between the belief systems of teachers and the content in the content in the curricular plans used by those teachers for instructional purposes?

*Research design.* A relationship among those things which influence the characteristics of the individual teacher and the outcome of teacher decisions--the curricular plan--was hypothesized. The investigation focused on characteristics of the learner, factors within the school, and the curriculum handbook, *Experiences in Decision*

*Making*, as influences upon the teacher whose expertise and personal expertise and personal qualification are carried into the curricular decision making process. Within this process, an attempt was made to assess teachers' views and beliefs about the needs of specific children, understanding the intents of the curriculum, and selecting appropriate objectives to meet children's needs--three specific processes leading to the actual task of designing a curricular plan. Finally, the curricular plans of teachers were examined in the light of content related to each aspect in the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 1.

Data were collected by administering the *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71) and a three-part teacher opinionnaire, and by analyzing curricular plans used by the teacher respondents as basis for instruction.

The sample consisted of 21 randomly selected teachers of upper elementary social studies classes in large-city, small-city, and rural school jurisdictions in the province of Alberta. Three criteria for selection were used: teachers were using the authorized elementary school social studies curriculum for the Province of Alberta, *Experiences in Decision Making*; respondents were teaching fourth, fifth, or sixth grade social studies classes; and, because teachers are expected to translate broadly stated goals into plans for classroom purposes, it was assumed that teachers in the sample perceived themselves as independent planners of curriculum.

Data contained in the teacher opinionnaire were tabulated and analyzed descriptively. Means and standard deviations were calculated

using *DEST07*, a computerized descriptive statistics program available from the Division of Educational Research, The University of Alberta. The *TIB* tests were scored by the developer, O. J. Harvey, and an experienced associate at the University of Colorado. Curricular plans were prepared for content analysis using the *Barrett Taxonomy* to reduce the text into meaningful content units. The *Alphabetic Sort and Frequency Count*, a computerized program also available from the Division of Education Research, The University of Alberta, was used to analyze the prepared texts of the curricular plans.

A panel of five judges comprised of two education professors, one classroom teacher, and two graduate students categorized 88 elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions. The resulting list of categories was then synthesized by the investigator in consultation with the judges. A second panel of ten judges consisting of the original five judges and five additional members comprised of two elementary education professors, two classroom teachers, and one graduate student attempted to place each of the 88 elements into one of the six categories which resulted from the work of the first panel.

A third panel of judges comprised of two classroom teachers and one graduate student categorized the content units of the processed curricular plans according to six criteria. The categorized content was subsequently considered in terms of the belief system by which the teachers in the sample had been classified.

Because data were analyzed descriptively, a criterion level based on response consistency was set for the consideration of responses

to the opinionnaire questions in which teachers were asked to assess the importance of certain curricular decision making processes and 17 postulated elements which influence those processes.

*Conduct of the study.* The study was conducted in three stages. The feasibility study involved four upper elementary teachers of social studies who completed the preliminary opinionnaire and offered constructive criticism from the classroom teacher's point of view. On the basis of these data, the opinionnaire was modified and three additional dimensions were included: the *This I Believe Test*; an open-ended question designed to elicit from teachers the elements they perceived as influences upon their curricular decisions; and a request for a curricular plan from each teacher for content analysis.

The pilot study involved six teachers of upper elementary social studies: the four teachers who participated in the feasibility study together with two additional teachers from the same school jurisdiction. The data generated by the subjects who participated in the feasibility and pilot studies were used to test the opinionnaire for validity and reliability.

The main study took place over a period of four weeks. In several instances, the investigator assumed the professional responsibilities of participating teachers while they completed the opinionnaire. In all instances, the investigator supervised and timed the completion of the *TIB* test. When written curricular plans were not available, taped interviews were conducted in order to obtain a

complete picture of the kinds of curricular plans used by the teacher respondents in their instructional programs.

*The findings.* The mean age of the teachers in the sample was 39.1 years. The sample was comprised of five males and 16 females. In the total sample of 21 teachers, the mean number of years of post secondary education was 3.8 and the respondents had been teaching upper elementary social studies for an average of 6.8 years. The teacher respondents had used the handbook, *Experiences in Decision Making*, an average of 3.4 times in conjunction with curricular planning in social studies. Fourteen of the 21 teachers in the sample (67 percent) were classified in the System 1 belief pattern, three were classified as System 2, one as System 3, and three teachers were classified in the System 4 category based on the *TIB* test scores.

*(i) Curricular determinants.* The teacher respondents generated 88 elements which they perceived as influence upon their curricular decisions. These were examined by a panel of five judges. The categories developed by this panel were synthesized and used as the basis for a second categorization task which was accomplished by a second panel of ten judges. Elements were assigned to six categories which were rank-ordered according to the weightings designated by the teacher respondents for each element generated. The categories of influence were:

(1) instructional resources;

(2) curriculum elements;

(3) student characteristics;

(4) teacher characteristics;

(5) instructional procedures; and

(6) evaluation.

The investigator had postulated 17 elements which, according to the literature, influence teachers when they are involved in the curricular decision making process. The teachers' ranking of these elements revealed that learner characteristics were believed to influence teachers' curricular decisions most. Certain conditions associated with the school were reported as major influences upon the curricular planner, especially access to appropriate instructional resources.

Teacher respondents, themselves, generated 15 of the same 17 elements which had been postulated. The type of classroom and furnishings and the availability of paraprofessional assistance which had been postulated as influences were not generated by the sample of teachers; nor were these elements ranked as important influences upon curricular decisions when they were presented to the teachers.

*(ii) Curricular decision making.* The teacher respondents indicated that the recently introduced handbook had caused them to modify their curricular decision making practices. They also reported that a broadly-stated curriculum such as *Experiences in Decision Making* could not be used as the basis of instructional activities without considerable elaboration and modification of the intents of the document in order to meet the needs of particular children. This

observation confirmed that teachers are participating in the curricular decision making process in the manner intended by the developers.

The respondents reported that their personal interpretation of the curriculum handbook was of considerable importance when translating the broad goals into instruction. This too concurs with the intents of the authors of *Experiences in Decision Making*. Identifying, and providing for, children's needs were seen by teachers as important components of the curricular decision making task. The selection of appropriate objectives to meet children's needs was also perceived as a curricular task of considerable importance.

Concepts of curriculum design were ascribed less importance than the tasks described above. The acquisition of relevant instructional resources, summative evaluation, integration, and the encouragement of student interaction were rated by the teacher respondents as moderately important design concepts.

*(iii) Belief systems.* When the importance of specific decision making processes and 17 postulated elements which influence curricular decisions were examined in the light of six subgrouping criteria, the belief systems of the teachers in the sample accounted for the greatest number of differences.

The effect of the belief systems of the teachers held constant in the comparison of generated elements of influence with the postulated elements. Teachers initiated 15 of the 17 postulates when they were asked to enumerate the elements which they perceived as influences upon their curricular decisions.

The categorized content of the curricular plans was considered in relation to the belief systems of the contributing teachers. Although only one respondent was categorized as System 3, that individual's curricular plan, as well as many of his responses in the opinionnaire, differed markedly from the content in the other 20 plans.

These observations suggest that the belief systems of teachers influence their perceptions of the curricular decision making process and the nature of the curricular plans which emerge from that process.

*Conclusions*

Because the study was descriptive in nature, limited inferences were drawn from the findings. However, certain conclusions may serve as the basis for further research.

(1) The preparation and distribution of curricula comprised of sets of broad goals authorized by provincial departments of education are drawing teachers into conscious curricular decision making at the classroom level.

(2) During the preliminary stages of the curricular decision making process, the teacher respondents placed major emphasis on taking into account children's knowledge, social, personal, and skill needs, their interests, and their talents when developing curricular plans.

(3) There is a hierarchy of influences which impinge on teachers when they attempt to make curricular decisions. The hierarchy is comprised of instructional materials (rank-ordered highest), curriculum elements, learner characteristics, teacher characteristics, instructional procedures, and evaluation (rank-ordered lowest).

(4) The extent to which individual categories of elements influence teachers' curricular decisions may vary during the different stages of the curricular decision making process. This variation may indicate a shift in the concerns of teachers as they approach the point of specifying objectives and putting a curricular plan into its final form.

(5) The belief systems of teachers may influence their perceptions of the curricular decision making process, and consequently, the nature of the curricular plans they develop for instructional purposes.

(6) Despite growing emphasis upon curricular concerns such as integration, process, and individualized instruction, there is evidence that content is still a major component of teachers' curricular plans.

*Implications for Practice*

There are several implications for curriculum development, teacher education, and school system personnel who are responsible for inservice programs.

*Curriculum development.* The findings indicated that a form of curricular decision making "science" exists. Every teacher in the sample was able to converse freely about the responsibilities associated with curricular tasks. They all described a method of approach to the task of curriculum development at the classroom level and everyone possessed some knowledge of curriculum design. Extended in-depth research at the classroom level could result in a fund of data which, if synthesized and compiled, would serve as the foundation for a

practitioner's guide to effective curricular decision making.

Universal components of such curricular data could be tested against existing curriculum theory in an effort to refine curriculum knowledge into a manageable conceptual framework capable of modification according to changing times.

*Teacher education.* Consideration should be given to the provision of extended practice in curricular decision making leading to the development of curricular plans which are designed with the child as the focal point. Before intending teachers can accomplish effective curricular decisions, they must be fully conscious of themselves--they must know their own beliefs, philosophies, limitations, and capabilities. Given this knowledge, they must then be able to identify children's needs, interests, and talents. Then they must know how to develop effective instructional procedures based upon identified available resources. These skill and knowledge requirements for intending teachers suggest modifications for teacher education programs.

*School system personnel.* The principal implication resides in the need for ongoing inservice designed to keep pace with advanced in curriculum theory, curriculum developments, and the curricular decision making process. Such post-service education programs would have two advantages: the practitioner would have the continued opportunity to modify his thinking and the curricular decision making processes used by him; the makers of standard curriculum guides and the curriculum theorists would have continued access to the "field" where ideas are tried and tested.

The existence of a hierarchy of influences which impinge upon teachers as they engage in the curricular decision making process suggests that school authorities should consider ways and means of alleviating or fostering these influences appropriately.

Consideration might be given to the importance of teachers' belief systems when candidates are selected for teacher education. As well, the belief systems of teachers may play an important role in the selection and assignment of classroom teachers and in organizing in-service and other professional development programs.

Finally, consideration might be given to maximizing the dissemination and implementation of "model" curricular plans which have been developed by teachers who are particularly skilled in the process of curricular decision making. Such plans might be analyzed by other teachers who wish to learn how to develop their own plans.

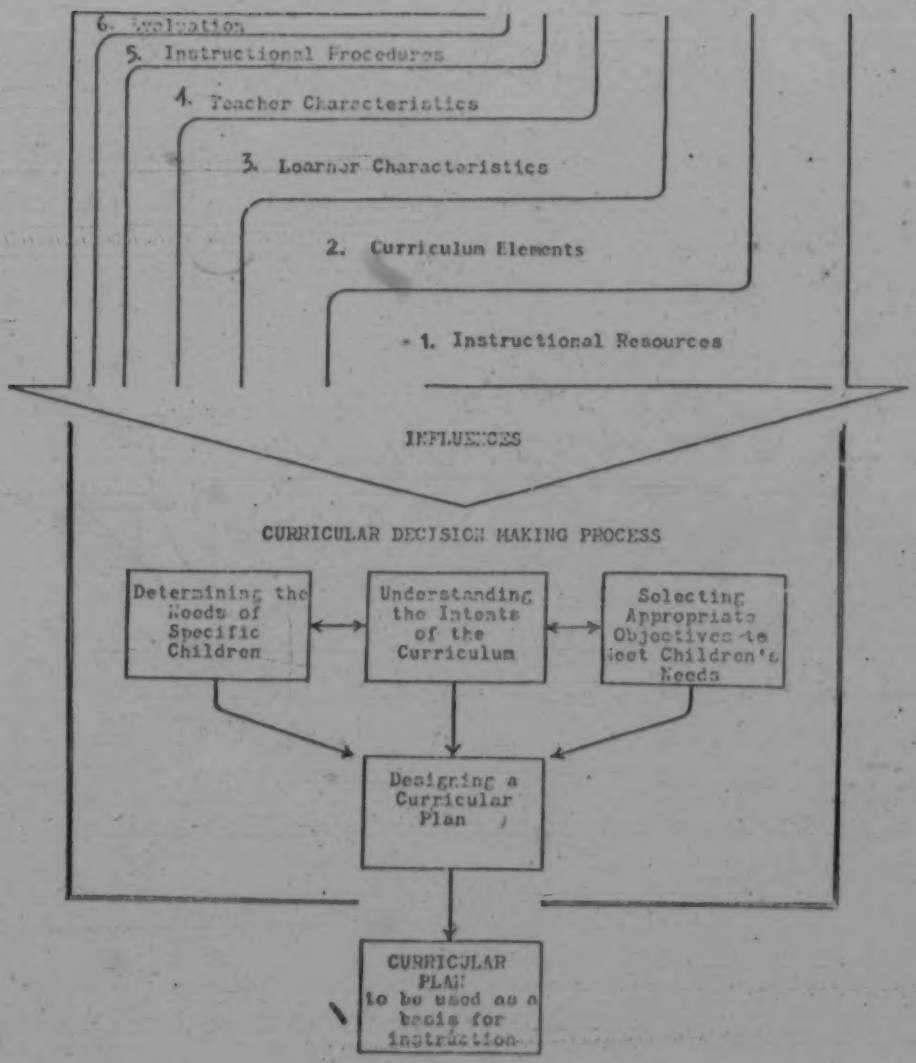
*Implications for the Conceptual Framework of the Study*

The conceptual framework which served as the basis for this study (Chapter 1) has been modified in the light of the findings.

Results of the study indicated that a hierarchy of influences impinges upon the curricular decision making process. In the original framework, characteristics of the learner, factors within the school, and the curriculum were posited as influences which combined with the characteristics and expertise of the teacher at the onset of the curricular decision making process. Influences which serve as determinants of the process are depicted in the proportions revealed by the findings.

Figure 2

A Revised Concept of Teacher Curricular Decision Making


6. Evaluation
5. Instructional Procedures
4. Teacher Characteristics
3. Learner Characteristics
2. Curriculum Elements
1. Instructional Resources
INFLUENCES
CURRICULAR DECISION MAKING PROCESS
Determining the Needs of Specific Children
Understanding the Intents of the Curriculum
Selecting Appropriate Objectives to Meet Children's Needs
Designing a Curricular Plan
CURRICULAR PLAN to be used as a basis for instruction

The rank-ordered categories of influence are as follows:

(1) instructional resources;

(2) curriculum elements;

(3) learner characteristics;

(4) teacher characteristics;

(5) instructional procedures; and

(6) evaluation.

Each category of influence originates outside the curricular decision making process and any one of the six influence categories may affect curricular decisions in varying amounts.

The four subprocesses which comprise the curricular decision making process remain unchanged. Determining the needs of specific children maintains a primary position in the process. Respondents ascribed the greatest degree of importance to this subprocess because it constitutes a starting point in the development of their curricular plans. Understanding the intents of the curriculum handbook and selecting appropriate objectives to meet children's needs were of less importance; therefore, these subprocesses remain unchanged in the conceptualization. There is a suggested linkage between subprocesses as the teacher proceeds towards the task of designing a curricular plan. However, there are cases when the teacher proceeds from any one of three subprocesses directly to the designing phase.

The curricular plan has been considered as the outcome of the curricular decision making process.

For the purposes of this study, community influences upon teachers' curricular decisions were not identified. However, in the light of evidence provided by the judges who categorized the elements generated by the teachers who participated in the study, there is a need to investigate the relationship of the community to other elements which influence the curricular decision making process. An attempt should be made to discover the position of community influence in the hierarchy of determinants established in the findings of this report.

The conceptual framework which has been modified by the results of this study should now be tested in a variety of instructional settings to establish its credibility.

*Implications for Further Research*

The findings in this study are an indication of the scope of the field of curriculum study. Each set of findings requires distillation and subsequent entry into a formative body of information about the curricular decision making process.

Specifically, four areas of concern are suggested here for further research.

(1) Six categories of elements which influence teachers' curricular decisions were identified in this study. Further research is needed to establish the validity of each influence category. There is also a need for enquiry into the ways in which teachers accommodate the influences which have been identified.

(2) Some indication of teachers' assessments of various components of the curricular decision making process has been reported in this study. In order to learn more about the curricular decision making process, there is a need for information about the following [illegible] teachers' knowledge about curriculum design; alternative [illegible] processes used by teachers when they attempt to develop curricular plans; and, the nature of the content in teachers' curricular plans together with the implications held by that content for the students for whom the plans were developed.

(3) The belief system of a teacher may influence that teacher's effectiveness as a curricular decision maker. Further research is needed to establish the importance of teachers' belief systems in the initial selection of candidates for teacher education, the selection and assignment of teachers for specific instructional duties, and the development of appropriate post-service activities for teachers in the field.

(4) Specific attention should be directed to the replication and refinement of content analysis procedures used in this study. Attempts should be made to investigate other aspects of curriculum development which could be clarified through the application of content analysis techniques. Problems still exist which are associated with the ambiguity of terms and the categorization of content units. The techniques of content analysis need extensive application in order to establish procedural rules that will ensure greater consistency in analyses.

(5) A methodology was developed for the collection of data in this investigation. Various rules and procedures were established in order to determine criterion levels for admissible information. These methodological procedures require further testing and modification. Descriptive research depends upon the application of procedures which ensure consistency, validity, and reliability.

(6) Further investigation is required in the assessment of discrepancies between teacher concepts of curricular planning and the content in the plans they actually devise. In the present investigation, discrepancies were noted in at least three areas: scope, sequence, and learner characteristics. The findings indicated that teachers assigned primary importance to these components of the curricular decision making process. Yet, these same components did not maintain the samel levels of importance when teachers generated elements which influence their curricular decisions, or when the content of their curricular plans was examined. Such discrepancies need further investigation.

Once sufficient descriptive information about the curricular decision making process has been acquired and synthesized, experimental studies may be considered. It is too early to make generalizations about the teacher's role in curriculum development at the classroom level. The formative aspect of ongoing descriptive and experimental research should be emphasized. Longitudinal and coordinated research may then lead to solutions for some of the problems associated with the field of curriculum development.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

*Questionnaire Package*

(Parts I-III)

# QUESTIONNAIRE PACKAGE

This questionnaire package consists of three parts. A brief description of each part is outlined below.

PART I THE TIB (THIS I BELIEVE) TEST

You will be asked to express your beliefs about ten topics of contemporary interest. You will be allowed a maximum of two minutes to write your response to each item. All responses will be held in strictest confidence.

The TIB is a separate booklet which you will receive from the investigator.

PART II PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DATA

Information given in this part of the questionnaire package will be held in strictest confidence. Each respondent will be assigned a coded identification number to ensure anonymity.

PART III TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE

This part of the questionnaire package consists of four sections which have to do with:

(a) an enumeration and ranking of the factors you believe influence you when you are making curricular decisions;

(b) your feelings about the social studies handbook, Experiences in Decision Making;

NOTE TO ALL RESPONDENTS: you should have a copy of Experiences in Decision Making at hand when you complete this part of the opinionnaire!

(c) your feelings about the responsibility of making curricular decisions; and

(d) the extent to which you think certain elements affect you when you are making curricular decisions (planning units).

---

Thank you in advance for taking the time to record your responses to this questionnaire package. Your cooperation is appreciated very much.

PART I

THIS I BELIEVE TEST

(Form T1B-71)

Name _____ Age _____ Sex _____

School Attending _____ Major _____

Fr. Soph. Jr. Sr. Grad.
(circle one)

Campus Address _____ Local phone _____

Date _____

(Copyright 1971, O. J. Harvey)

INSTRUCTIONS

In the following pages you will be asked to write your opinions or beliefs about several topics. Please write at least two (2) sentences about each topic. You will be timed on each topic at a pace that will make it necessary for you to work rapidly.

Be sure to write what you genuinely believe.

You must write on the topics in the order of their appearance. Wait to turn each page until the experimenter gives you the signal. And once you have turned a page, do not turn back to it.

PLEASE DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO BEGIN.

* * * * * * * * * *

NOTE: The experimenter allotted TWO (2) minutes per item. This was in agreement with instructions received from the developer of the test, Professor O. J. Harvey.

The items have been collapsed for the purposes of this appendix. Each item appears on a separate page in the test booklet itself.

* * * * * * * * * *

Each of the TEN (10) items is prefaced by the following phrase:

THIS I BELIEVE ABOUT . . .

The items are as follows:

(1) . . . the Canadian way of life.
(2) . . . religion.
(3) . . . people.
(4) . . . law and order.
(5) . . . life after death.
(6) . . . marriage.
(7) . . . guns.
(8) . . . friendship.
(9) . . . abortion.
(10) . . . legalizing marijuana.

## PART II

### PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

1. _____ _____
   Surname Given name(s)

2. Age in years.....(____) years

3. Sex: M F (Circle one)

4. Number of years during which you have taught fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade social studies .....(____) years

5. Number of times you have attempted to use Experiences in Decision Making as the basis of your social studies program .....(____) times

6. Years of post secondary education (beyond the completion of matriculation) .....(____) years

7. List all completed university courses which HAVE ASSISTED you in the task of CURRICULAR DECISION-MAKING, especially as this process relates to the preparation of curricular plans for social studies. Please complete this section as accurately as possible.

| | Course Description | Number | University/College | Year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Examples | Teacher's Role in Curriculum Development | Ed. C.I. 302 | University of Alberta | 1972 |
| | Program Development in Elementary Social Studies | Ed. C.I. 512 | University of Alberta | 1971 |
| a) | _____ | | | |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | ____ |
| b) | _____ | | | |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | ____ |
| c) | _____ | | | |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | ____ |

University courses, continued

| | Course Description | Number | University/College | Year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| d) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| e) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| f) | | | | |
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| g) | | | | |
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| k) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| l) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

8. List all <u>other</u> experiences - - mini-courses, in-service seminars, micro-teaching, workshops, symposiums, etc., in which you have participated for specific assistance in curricular decision making especially as it pertains to social studies and the utilization of <u>Experiences in Decision Making</u>.

| | Type of Experience | Where Given | By Whom | When |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Example | Two-day workshop in the preparation of behavioral objectives | Ponoka | Regional Office Consultant | 1969 |
| a) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| b) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| c) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| d) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| e) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| f) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

# PART III

## TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE

### Section A

In this section of the opinionnaire, you are asked to do three things:

(a) Think of all the factors which influence you when you are developing curricular plans. As these factors occur to you, record them, one per card, on the small white cards you will find enclosed together with paper clips in a small white envelope accompanying this questionnaire package.

(b) Once you have recorded all the factors you can think of, one per card, sort the cards into an order of influence, beginning with the most influential factor and ending with the least influential factor.

(c) After you have ordered the cards, you are asked to rank them into five categories according to the following scheme:

i) into one pile at your extreme right, place all the cards which represent factors which influence you very greatly . . . the most;

ii) into a pile to the left of the first group of cards, place the cards which represent the factors which influence you to a large extent but not as great as those factors which you placed into the first pile;

iii) into a pile to the left of the second group of cards, place the cards which represent the factors which influence you to some extent but not as much as the factors you have placed into the other two groups;

iv) into a pile to the left of the third pile of cards, place the cards which represent the factors which influence you occasionally but not to the extent of the factors you have already placed into the first three groups;

v) into a pile at your extreme left, place the cards which represent the factors which influence you very little . . . least of all.

Now, look at the cards again and be sure that you have placed the cards you really want into each group. When you are satisfied that the ranking is as you wish it to be, number all the cards in the pile on the left (i.e. the factors which influence you the least) with a "1." Number the cards in the next pile (to the right) with a "2," the cards in the middle pile with a "3," the cards in the fourth pile to the right with a "4," and finally, the cards in the fifth pile (i.e. the factors which influence you the most) with a "5." Place a paper clip over each pack of cards and put them all into the white envelope.

# PART III

## TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE

### Section B

In this section of the opinionnaire, you are asked to consider six questions which are related to Experiences in Decision Making, a handbook for teachers of social studies. For each question, five responses have been suggested. You are asked to select the response which most nearly expresses your view. Then, place a check (✓) in the blank space which appears before the response of your choice. An example has been given.

| Example | How do you view the scope of Experiences in Decision Making in terms of demands made upon you as a teacher? |
|---|---|
| ___ | I feel the scope is unreasonably great. |
| ___ | I feel the scope is great. |
| ___ | I feel the scope is adequate. |
| ✓ | I feel the scope is rather narrow. |
| ___ | I feel the scope is extremely narrow. |

The check which appears in the blank space before the fourth response indicates the respondent's choice.

You are reminded that you should have at hand a copy of Experiences in Decision Making for reference as you complete this section of the opinionnaire.

1. How do you view the extent to which Experiences in Decision Making places the responsibility for making curricular decisions upon you as a user of the program? Check one response only.

___ (a) I feel the responsibility is too great.

___ (b) I feel the responsibility is considerable but challenging.

___ (c) I feel the responsibility is no greater than it is for the utilization of any other curriculum.

___ (d) I feel the responsibility is not as great as it is for the utilization of a more prescriptive curriculum.

___ (e) I feel I can not assess the extent of responsibility at this time.

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section B, continued

2. How do you view the nature of Experiences in Decision Making? Check one response only.

___ (a) The curriculum is too prescriptive.

___ (b) The curriculum offers adequate guidelines for the development of curricular plans.

___ (c) The curriculum serves only as a point in departure in developing my own curricular plans.

___ (d) The curriculum offers inadequate guidelines for the development of curricular plans.

___ (e) The curriculum is vague and very non-directive.

3. How do you view the explanation of the valuing process as it is presented in A. on pages 9 and 10 of the handbook, Experiences in Decision Making? Check one response only.

___ (a) Too restrictive; does not allow for elaboration or further specification

___ (b) Specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making with slight modification and/or further specification

___ (c) General; in need of considerable elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children

___ (d) Too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive elaboration and/specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children

___ (e) Vague and confusing; consequently, I construct and use objectives which differ from those stated in Experiences in Decision Making

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section B, continued

4. How do you view the explanation of affective objectives as it is presented in B. on pages 10 and 11 of the handbook, Experiences in Decision Making? Check one response only.

___ (a) Too restrictive; does not allow for any elaboration or further specification

___ (b) Specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making with slight modification and/or further specification

___ (c) General; in need of considerable elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children

___ (d) Too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children

___ (e) Vague and confusing; consequently, I construct and use objectives which differ from those stated in Experiences in Decision Making.

5. How do you view the explanation of cognitive objectives as it is presented in C. on pages 11 and 12 of the handbook, Experiences in Decision Making? Check one response only.

___ (a) Too restrictive; does not allow for any elaboration or further specification

___ (b) Specific enough to be used as the basis of curricular decision making with slight modification and/or further specification

___ (c) General; in need of considerable elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children

___ (d) Too general to be used as the basis for curricular decision making without extensive elaboration and/or specification in order to meet the instructional needs of specific children

___ (e) Vague and confusing; consequently, I construct and use objectives which differ from those stated in Experiences in Decision Making.

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section B, continued

6. What effect has the handbook, Experiences in Decision Making, had upon the preparation of your own curricular plans? Check one response only.

___ (a) It has encouraged me to seek some assistance in order to attempt the development of my own curricular plans.

___ (b) It has caused me to modify old curricular plans in order to meet the objectives of the new curriculum.

___ (c) It has caused me to realize that my old curricular plans are inadequate in the light of the expressed objectives of Experiences in Decision Making and, consequently, I am in the process of attempting to develop appropriate plans.

___ (d) It has drawn me into the task of curricular decision making which is an activity I am really not prepared to undertake at this time.

___ (e) It has not altered my curricular planning activity; I continue to use my old plans without modifying them in order to meet the objectives which are stated in the new curriculum.

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE
Section C

Indicate the degree of importance you attach to each of the following curricular decision making processes as it relates to the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making, the elementary social studies handbook published and authorized by the Alberta Department of Education.

Scale of Values
1 of minimal or no importance to me
2 of slight importance to me
3 of moderate importance to me
4 of considerable importance to me
5 of great importance to me

Instructions For each response, circle the digit which most closely indicates your personal opinion.

Example In the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making, of what importance is the cooperation of your principal?

If your principal's cooperation is of great importance to you, then you would encircle the digit 5 in the following manner:

1 2 3 4 (5)

| Degree of importance to you | 1 Minimal | 2 Slight | 3 Moderate | 4 Considerable | 5 Great |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. In order to develop curricular plans based upon the broad goals provided in Experiences in Decision Making, of what importance is your own personal understanding of: | | | | | |
| (a) the valuing process as it is defined in the handbook | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) the affective objectives as they are defined in the handbook | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) the cognitive objectives as they are defined in the handbook | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section C, continued

| Degree of importance to you | 1 Minimal | 2 Slight | 3 Moderate | 4 Considerable | 5 Great |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. In the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making, of what importance to you is your provision for the following needs of children: | | | | | |
| (a) their knowledge needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) their social and personal needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) their skill needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. In the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making, of what importance to you is your selection of appropriate objectives to meet the following needs of children: | | | | | |
| (a) their knowledge needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) their social and personal needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) their skill needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. In the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making, of what importance to you is each of the following considerations: | | | | | |
| (a) the amount of content | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) the order in which material is presented | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) the relationship of one area of study with another (social studies with art, science, mathematics, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (d) the chance for children to role play and interact with eachother in a variety of ways | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section C, continued

| Degree of importance to you | Minimal 1 | Slight 2 | Moderate 3 | Considerable 4 | Great 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. (continued from previous page) In the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making, of what importance to you is each of the following considerations: | | | | | |
| (e) the availability of instructional materials (books, films, equipment, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (f) checking up on progress during the unit or the time in which the curricular plan will be implemented | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (g) checking up on progress at the end of the unit or at the conclusion of the implementation of the curricular plan | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

# TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE

## Section D

You will be asked to consider three categories of environmental influence in this section of the opinionnaire: the learner, the school, and the curriculum for social studies, Experiences in Decision Making. Indicate the extent to which you believe each of the following elements influences you as you develop your curricular plans.

Scale of Values
1 not at all
2 to a very little extent
3 to some extent
4 to a considerable extent
5 to a very great extent

Instructions For each response, circle the digit which most closely indicates your personal opinion.

Example To what extent does your principal influence you when you are developing your curricular plans?

If your principal influences you to some extent when you are developing curricular plans, then you would encircle the digit 3 in the following manner:

1 2 (3) 4 5

| Extent of influence upon you | 1 Not at all | 2 Very little | 3 Some | 4 Considerable | 5 Very great |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. To what extent do the following characteristics of learners influence you when you are developing curricular plans: | | | | | |
| (a) the need for knowledge | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) social and personal needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) the need for skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (d) interests | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (e) talents | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section D, continued

| Extent of influence upon you | 1 Not at all | 2 Very little | 3 Some | 4 Considerable | 5 Very great |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B. To what extent do the following conditions in your school influence you when you are developing curricular plans: | | | | | |
| (a) the number of students to be instructed at any one time..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) the type of space in which teaching is to take place (confined, as in a closed classroom; shared, as in open space, etc.) ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) the type of facility in which teaching is to take place (closed classroom, laboratory, multi-purpose room, open-space, library, etc.)..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (d) the type of furnishings, lighting, versatility, and other physical features of the facility in which teaching is to take place..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (e) timetabling, scheduling, and other timing limitations which are peculiar to your own school | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (f) reporting procedures, record keeping, and other policies which are peculiar to your own school..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (g) the cooperative and friendly spirit of the school in which you teach..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (h) time during regular school hours for planning (i.e. making curricular decisions; developing unit plans, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (i) funds for instructional materials, field trips, etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE, Section D, continued

| Extent of influence upon you | Not at all 1 | Very little 2 | Some 3 | Considerable 4 | Very great 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (j) access to necessary instructional materials such as audio-visual aides, references, community resources, etc. (they may exist but you may not be able to get at them easily) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (k) assistance in the form of teacher aides, secretarial services, technicians who can set up and run machines, etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C. To what extent does the handbook, Experiences in Decision Making, influence you when you are developing curricular plans? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND GENEROUS COOPERATION!

# APPENDIX B

*Official Correspondence*

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
Muenzinger Building, University of Colorado at Boulder, 80302 / (303)443-2211

August 30, 1972

Mr. David Jeffares
Department of Elementary Education
University of Alberta
11212-87 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Dear Mr. Jeffares:

Dr. Olson has passed on to me your letter to him outlining your thoughts on your dissertation. Let me first try to answer the questions you raise concerning the administration, scoring and possible combinations of the different systems in your sample.

I am sure that you will want to time your respondents while they are completing the TIB. We have found in several instances marked differences between the responses of individuals if they are allowed to complete the TIB leisurely, for example, at home versus completing it under the constraints of the two-minute time limit we impose for each item. This difference is generally in the direction of the more leisurely completion indicating higher abstractness. Therefore we insist, for the sake of the validity of the instruments, that some device be used to restrict the time allowed on each item. In some instances we have done this with a timer set at a two-minute interval, but our strong preference would be for this to be under the control of a tester who monitors the situation and controls the time. The logic underlying this is that belief systems, possibly personality in general, are revealed maximally under conditions of moderately high arousal. Restricting the time individuals have for the completion seems to give rise to high arousal and more valid responses as indicated above. The test can easily be modified along the lines you suggested. In fact, some of the modifications you are suggesting have been used in a number of Canadian studies, including one in Newfoundland and other cities and provinces as well. In fact, we tend typically to vary the TIB referents to make them of as high involvement as possible to the particular respondents. Our concern therefore is in keeping the level of involvement high rather than keeping constant a specific content. For example, we have found teachers to react differentially to such referents as "calling the teacher by the first name," "insubordination," and other educationally-linked terms. In addition to keeping involvement high, this also adds to the interest of the respondents since it presents a kind of seeming face validity.

I am enclosing a copy of our scoring instructions which, although not complete, will give you a good feel of how the TIB is scored. However, if you can afford it, I would recommend, again for validity's sake, that you have us score the test for you. In addition to systems, we typically score for six or seven dimensions that are related to systems but sufficiently independent to add appreciably to the variance. These include such things as openness, candor, cynicism, optimism, evaluativeness, externality, complexity, and others. Normally we have scoring done by two trained readers, the cost of which is $2.50 per booklet per reader for scoring for systems and dimensions, including cost of booklets.

I notice in your proposal you envision possibly collapsing your group simply into the concretes and the abstracts. You lose considerable information in doing this; in fact, on some possible outcome variables you may negate your results, for example, by putting systems 1 and 2 together and/or 3 and 4. Thus I would suggest you try first to isolate as clear representatives as possible of the three systems (I don't hink you should expect to find a sufficient number of system 2 to be used in your study). If you have a sufficient number of each of these, you probably would want to carry out one of your analyses in which you used only "pure" system representatives. In another analyses you might wish to combine some of the admixtures of systems with the "pure" systems to augment your end. I am sure you will not need to add to your number of system 1 representatives. If you need to augment systems 3 and/or 4, I would recommend that you make sure that those included in system 3 are predominantly 3 and those in 4 are predominantly 4, even though they may have some bits of one or more other systems.

I don't feel quite comfortable in commenting upon your measure of reactions to different curricula by teachers of the different belief systems. I wonder if you might articulate in somewhat more detail this part of your proposal so that I could react to it with some specificity and potentially greater help to you. I am quite sure, however, that you should look at interactions between the curriculum chosen (i.e., the "new" versus "old" social science and the belief system of the teacher). To do this might get you more in the direction of the impact of this interactive process upon student performance than you intended to go. A study that we plan to carry out envisions an examination of an interaction between curriculum, teacher belief system and belief system of student. But this quickly gets so large and complex that it would surpass the limits of a doctoral dissertation.

I hope this information proves of help to you. I suspect you will have further questions, in which case I would be delighted to try to answer them if I could. In case some of the studies are not available, we are ~~enclosing~~ (since it's hard to cover) copies of most of our studies we have done on conceptual systems to complete your personal library. Best wishes to you in the success of your study, and we would be pleased to receive copies of any results you obtain.

Sincerely,

O. J. Harvey

O. J. Harvey
Professor

OJH/bd
Enclosures

cc: Dr. Miles Olson, School of Education

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
BOULDER, COLORADO 80302

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



September 1, 1972

Mr. David Jeffares
Department of Elementary Education
The University of Alberta
11212-87 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mr. Jeffares:

You have a very interesting design and I anticipate some very meaningful results. It seems to me that your application of the Harvey Research is most appropriate and that you will find it to be useful.

I'm sending your letter to Professor Harvey and asking him to respond to your specific questions. Our use of the TIB has not been extensive and since Professor Harvey is here on campus, it seemed to me to be best that I refer your questions to him. I should comment on the scoring, however. Professor Harvey and a number of his graduate students are prepared to score the tests, however, they are reasonably expensive to score since they must be treated individually by at least two raters. This takes time and time translates into money, unfortunately. Perhaps Professor Harvey will respond with cost figures. I suggest you write to him if he does not.

One of the concerns that I have is that you may not find sufficient type 4 individuals to fill your group. We found that teachers are heavily type 1 in previous studies here. You may find a good many type 3 persons, however, group 2 will be somewhat more difficult to find and group persons may be virtually non existant. I do not know the makeup of the typical teacher sample in Canada and it could be quite different from what we found. That in itself would be a significant find-ind in my opinion.

I wish you success and I hope that Professor Harvey will answer you quickly.

Sincerely,

Miles C. Olson
Associate Dean

MCO:pn

# COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

1. Nature of Activity (Check One)

   Student Teaching Internship _____ Demonstration/Experimentation _____

   Special Practicum _____ Research X

2. Organization to be Involved

   Edmonton Public School System _____ County of Strathcona _____

   Edmonton Separate School System _____ St. Albert Protestant/Separate School System X

   N. A. I. T. _____

   U. of A. Faculty of _____ Other _____

3. Requestor (staff member)

   Name David Jeffares Position Grad Student Date Oct 25/72

   Request made on behalf of _____

4. Description of Activity - Include title, objectives, procedures, evaluation, techniques, etc.

## A Descriptive Analysis of Teachers' Curricular Plans

This will be a descriptive study which will attempt to shed light upon the following questions:

(a) what environmental influences affect teachers as they develop curriculum plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making?

(b) is there a relationship between a teacher's belief system and the content in the curricular plan that teacher had developed.

Of interest, also, is the specific attention assigned by teachers to the individual needs of children in curricular plans, the design features in curricular plans, and congruence between objectives in Experiences in Decision Making and the curricular plan of the teacher.

A questionnaire package will be administered to six teachers, two in each of these schools: Leo Nickerson, Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Sir George Simpson.

The package consists of three parts:

Part I Professional and Personal Information
Part II The TIB (This I Believe) Test
Part III Teacher Opinionnaire

In addition to the questionnaire package, a curricular plan will be obtained from each participating teacher.

The data will be descriptively displayed. Belief systems will be considered in terms of the kind of curricular plans teachers have developed. Evidence of the data in Parts I and III of the instrumentation will be sought after in the curricular plans through content analysis of the documents.

Follow-up interviews will be conducted with those teachers whose responses and/or plans show uniqueness in some way.

The compiled data will be used as the basis of:

(a) a report of the "state of art" of curricular decision making in the field; and

(b) a series of questions for further research.

As well, it is anticipated that this beginning in the use of content analysis techniques for the evaluation of curricular plans (i.e. curriculum documentation) may prove useful to those researchers who might wish to continue attempts in utilizing this unbiased means of analysis of subjective materials.

5. Anticipated value to requestor

The data from the pilot study will enable the investigator to make appropriate alternations in the research design, questionnaire format, or data collection techniques preparatory to the main study.

6. Anticipated value to cooperating organization

There is really little direct value to the cooperating schools and teachers other than the results of the data analyses which may be of help to them when they are developing curricular plans. Central office may find some of the data useful in determining in-service programs or other forms of assistance to teachers who develop their own curricular plans.

7. Estimate of cost (see renumeration guidelines)

No costs will be borne by the system. In order that teachers not be "burdened" with the questionnaire, the investigator proposes to offer remuneration in the form of teaching for them while they complete the instruments.

8. Suggested personnel, schools and times

Personnel will be associated with each of three schools:

1. Leo Nickerson - 2 teachers
2. Sir Alexander Mackenzie - 2 teachers
3. Sir George Simpson - 2 teachers

4th, 5th, or 6th grade teachers who must be users of Experiences in Decision Making, the social studies handbook, and who develop plans prior to instruction.

---

For Office Use Only

Approved by _____ Division of Field Experiences Date Oct 26/72

Approved by _____ Date Nov. 2/72

Subject to the following conditions:

(a) A report of the results of findings of this project is required by the cooperating school system (Check one) Yes ___ No ___

(b) Other

COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

1. Nature of Activity (Check One)

Student Teaching Internship _____ Demonstration/Experimentation _____

Special Practicum _____ Research X

2. Organization to be Involved

Edmonton Public School System X County of Strathcona _____

Edmonton Separate School System _____ St. Albert Protestant/Separate School System _____

N. A. I. T. _____

U. of A. Faculty of _____ Other _____

3. Requestor (staff member)

Name David Jeffares Position Grad Student Date Oct 25/72

Request made on behalf of _____

4. Description of Activity - Include title, objectives, procedures, evaluation techniques, etc.

A Descriptive Analysis of Teachers' Curricular Plans

This will be a descriptive study which will attempt to shed light upon the following questions:

(a) what environmental influences affect teachers as they develop curriculum plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making.

(b) is there a relationship between a teacher's belief system and the content in the curricular plan that teacher has developed.

Of interest, also, is the specific attention assigned by teachers to the individual needs of children in curricular plans, the design features in curricular plans, and congruence between the objectives in Experiences in Decision Making and the curricular plan of the teacher.

A questionnaire package will be administered to approximately eight 4th, 5th, or 6th grade teachers who have been randomly selected from all 4th, 5th, and 6th grade teachers in approximately five randomly selected schools in the Edmonton Public School System.

The package consists of three parts:

Part I Professional and Personal Information
Part II The TIB (This I Believe) Test
Part III Teacher Opinionnaire

In addition to the questionnaire package, a curricular plan will be obtained from each participating teacher.

The data will be descriptively displayed. Belief systems will be considered in terms of the kind of curricular plans teachers have developed. Evidence of the data in Parts I and III of the instrumentation will be sought after in the curricular plans through content analysis of the documents.

Follow-up interviews will be conducted with those teachers whose responses and/or plans show uniqueness in some way.

The compiled data will be used as the basis of:

(a) a report of the "state of the art" of curricular decision making in the field; and

(b) a series of questions for further research.

As well, it is anticipated that this beginning in the use of content analysis technqiues for the evaluation of curricular plans (i.e. curriculum documentation) may prove useful to those researchers who might wish to continue attempts in utilizing this unbiased means of analysis of subjective materials.

5. Anticipated value to requestor

The data from this investigation should provide descriptive evidence for the research questions which form the basis of the dissertation which is one of the requirements of the doctoral program in Curriculum Development (Department of Elementary Education, The University of Alberta).

6. Anticipated value to cooperating organization

The data will be sueful to the Curricular Associates in the Edmonton Public School System, particularly those associated with the schools and teachers, selected for this study. Central Office may find the information useful in relation to in-service planning, matching certain teachers with specific curricular decision-making tasks, and an analysis of what is happening in the field in respect to the development of curricular plans based upon Experiences in Decision Making.

7. Estimate of cost (see remuneration guidelines)

No costs will be borne by the system. The investigator will substitute for the responding teacher if requested, so that teacher need not lose personal time by virtue of a rather comprehensive questionnaire package to be completed.

8. Suggested personnel, schools and times

A. Stage one of selection: random sample of schools which house Grades 4, 5, and 6.
B. Stage 2 of selection: random sample of teachers (about eight in all) from the schools selected in stage one.

---

For Office Use Only

Approved by _____ Division of Field Experiences

Date Oct. 26/72

Approved by _____

Date Nov. 22/72

Subject to the following conditions:

(a) A report of the results of findings of this project is required by the cooperating school system (Check one) Yes X No ___

(b) Other.

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
10010 - 107A Avenue Edmonton Alberta T5H 0Z8 Telephone (403) 429-5621

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Mr. G. F. Nicholson, Associate Superintendent

November 21, 1972

Mr. W.A. Kiffiak
Administrative Assistant
Division of Field Experiences
University of Alberta
EDMONTON, Alberta

Dear Mr. Kiffiak:

RE: Research Request - David JEFFARES

This project has been approved on a permissive basis following examination by our department. We have obtained tentative approval from eight principals to conduct the project in their schools.

In line with permissive approval, Mr. Jeffares should contact the following principals to obtain final approval and to make the arrangements required to conduct the research.

W.H. Coull, Principal, Scott Robertson Elementary, 13515-107 St., (475-3565)
D.C. Geake, Principal, Bellevue Elementary, 11515-71 St., (477-5933)
L.K. Lynn, Principal, Lendrum Elementary, 11330-54 Ave., (434-3588)
S.I. Dineen, Principal, Windsor Park Elementary, 8720-118 St., (433-3924)
A.W. Frost, Principal, Eastwood Elementary Jr. High, 12023-81 St., (477-2352)
E. Souch, Principal, Westbrook Elementary, 11915-40 Ave., (434-5811)
J.D. Cuyler, Principal, Athlone Elementary, 12940-129 St., (455-5823)
D.P. Green, Principal, Mee-Yah-Noh Elementary, 9221-128A Ave., (475-1929)

Sincerely

Tom Blowers

Tom Blowers, Ph.D.
DIRECTOR - EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TB/ndd
c.c. Dr. N.L. Herson
Mr. D. Jeffares
Mr. W.H. Coull
Mr. D.C. Geake
Mr. L.K. Lynn
Mr. S.I. Dineen
Mr. A.W. Frost
Mr. E. Souch
Mr. J.D. Cuyler
Mr. D.P. Green

Department of Elementary Education
The University of Alberta
#207, 11212 - 87 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
October 26, 1972

Mr. G. Harold Dawe
Superintendent of Schools
Red Deer Public School District #104
4747 - 53 Street
Red Deer, Alberta

Dear Mr. Dawe:

I am currently enrolled in the second year of the doctoral program in Curriculum Studies in the Department of Elementary Education, The University of Alberta. I have successfully completed candidacy (September 8, 1972) and am presently organizing the finals aspects of the research design associated with a project I wish to undertake for my dissertation. I hope to commence data collection sometime after mid-November with completion scheduled for mid-December.

A summary of the research project I wish to undertake has been included with this letter. As well, a copy of the questionnaire package has been included for your inspection. Three points should be borne in mind when you consider the instrument:

1. there may be additions, deletions, and/or alterations as the result of a pilot study which will be undertaken during the last week in October and the first week in November; and

2. a condensed version of the TIB (This I Believe) Test has been included; the copyrighted (and validated) test from Colorado State University consists of fourteen pages - - one page of instructions and one page for statements pertaining to each of thirteen items in the test; and

3. the envelope of small blank cards to be used in conjunction with Part III, Section D has not been included.

I wish to seek permission to conduct my research in the Red Deer School District #104. The selection of 5-8 teachers who offer instruction in fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade social studies based upon Experiences in Decision Making will be made as follows:

1. at least five schools which offer fourth, fifth, and sixth grade instruction in social studies based upon Experiences in Decision Making will be selected randomly (or enough schools to ensure no problem in obtaining 5-8 qualifying teachers randomly); then,

2. 5-8 teachers who offer fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade social studies based upon Experiences in Decision Making will be selected randomly from all the qualifying teachers in the random sample of schools.

Once the sample of teachers has been determined, the investigator will arrange an interview with each teacher to explain the nature of the study and the mode of participation. Arrangements will be made with each teacher to administer the questionnaire package at a time which is mutually agreeable to the teacher and to the investigator. Should the teacher desire release time in order to participate in the research project, the investigator is prepared to substitute for that teacher while he/she completes the tasks associated with the instrument.

In addition to the completed questionnaire package, each participating teacher will be asked to submit a curricular plan which has been implemented, is currently being implemented, or will be implemented in the near future. It is hoped that the nature of the plan might be preactive - - something preparatory to instruction. Each curricular plan (based upon Experiences in Decision Making) will be analyzed from the point of view of support for, or evidence of, various phenomena reported in the questionnaire package.

In some cases, the investigator may wish to arrange a follow-up interview with particular teachers whose data warrant further elaboration or clarification.

I have attempted to indicate the exact degree of involvement I expect of each teacher who participates in the study. There should be no real loss of time to teachers, students, or the system; as well, no costs to teachers or to the system are involved.

I should greatly appreciate the opportunity to work in your system. I shall be glad to forward further explanation or other information you may require in order to reach a decision in this matter.

Yours in anticipation,

David Jeffares
Graduate Student
Department of Elementary Education

Encl: two
:dj

# RED DEER PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 104

Offices: 4747 - 53rd Street Phone 347-1101

RED DEER, ALBERTA

T4N 2E6

G. de KLEINE
Secretary-Treasurer

G. H. DAWE
Superintendent of Schools


1st November, 1972

Mr. David Jeffares
Department of Elementary Education
University of Alberta
#207, 11212 - 87th Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mr. Jeffares:

We shall be prepared to help you in your research for your dissertation. This permission, of course, will be dependant upon the willingness of the teachers to participate.

I am leaving the matter entirely to Mrs. D. Fern Solty and I trust that you will find it quite agreeable to deal with her directly from now on in regard to your work in the District.

Yours sincerely,

G. H. Dawe
Superintendent of Schools

GHD/cjm

cc Mrs. D. Fern Solty

Department of Elementary Education
The University of Alberta
#207, 11212 - 87 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
October 26, 1972

Mr. Gerald A. Wilson
Superintendent of Schools
Three Hills School Division #60
Trochu, Alberta.

Dear Mr. Wilson:

I am currently enrolled in the second year of the doctoral program in Curriculum Studies in the Department of Elementary Education, The University of Alberta. I have successfully completed candidacy (September 8, 1972) and am presently organizing the final aspects of the research design associated with a project I wish to undertake for my dissertation. I hope to commence data collection sometime after mid-November with completion scheduled for mid-December.

A summary of the research project I wish to undertake has been included with this letter. As well, a copy of the questionnaire package has been included for your inspection. Three points should be borne in mind when you consider this instrument:

1. there may be additions, deletions, and/or alterations as the result of a pilot project which will be undertaken during the last week in October and the first week in November;

2. a condensed version of the TIB (This I Believe) Test has been included; the copyrighted (and validated) test from Colorado State University consists of fourteen pages - - one page of instructions and one page for statements pertaining to each of thirteen items in the test; and

3. the envelope of small blank cards to be used in conjunction with Part III, Section D has not been included.

I wish to seek permission to conduct my research in the Three Hills School Division #60. The selection of 5-8 teachers who teach fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade social studies based upon Experiences in Decision Making, will be made as follows:

1. at least five schools which offer fourth, fifth, and sixth grade instruction in social studies based upon Experiences in Decision Making will be selected randomly (or enough schools to ensure no problem in obtaining 5-8 qualifying teachers randomly); then

2. 5-8 teachers who offer fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade social studies will be selected randomly from all teachers who offer social studies at the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade levels in the randomly selected sample of schools.

Once the sample of teachers has been determined, the investigator will arrange an interview with each teacher to explain the nature of the study and the mode of participation, Arrangements will be made with each teacher to administer the questionnaire package at a time which is mutually agreeable to the teacher and to the investigator. Should the teacher desire release time in order to participate in the research project, the invesitgator is prepared to substitute for that teacher while he/she completes the tasks associated with the instrument.

In addition to the completed questionnaire package, each participating teacher will be asked to submit a curricular plan which has been implemented, is currently being implemented, or will be implemented in the near future. It is hoped that the nature of the plan might be preactive - - something preparatory to instruction. Each curricular plan will be analyzed from the point of view of support for, or evidence of, various pehnomena in the questionnaire package.

In some cases, the investigator may wish to arrange a follow-up interview with particular teachers whose data warrant further elaboration or clarification.

I have attempted to indicate the exact degree of involvement I expect of each teacher who participates in the study. There should be no time loss to teachers, students, or the system; as well, no cost to teachers or the system are involved.

I should greatly appreciate the opportunity to work in your system. I shall be glad to forward further information and explanation should you require same in order to reach a decision in this matter.

Yours in anticipation,

David Jeffares
Graduate Student
Department of Elementary Education

Encl: two
:dj

Three Hills School Division No. 60

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

TROCHU, ALBERTA

October 30, 1972

Mr. David Jeffares,
Department of Elementary Education,
The University of Alberta,
#207; 11212 - 87 Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mr. Jeffares:

Your study proposal focuses on a curricular area which seems to be of current interest, and indeed concern, to teachers of the intermediate grades.

I am sure that teachers would be willing to co-operate in the study, and my permission is hereby granted for you to proceed with your investigation.

Best wishes to you in your research.

Yours truly,

G. A. Wilson,
Superintendent of Schools

GAW/jdr
Enclosure

Copy of a letter received from O. J. Harvey in which he offered descriptions of the dimensional features of the *This I Believe Test* (Form TIB-71).

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
Muenzinger Building, University of Colorado at Boulder, 80302 / (303)443-2211

March 9, 1973

Mr. David Jeffares
Department of Elementary Education
University of Alberta
#207, 11212-87 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Dear Mr. Jeffares:

We are airmailing to you today under separate cover your scored This I Believe booklets. Please accept our apologies for having taken so long to get this scored.

I believe our letter of November 17, 1972, described the way in which the dimensions were to be scored. Following are some brief descriptions of these dimensions:

Openness--by which is meant the respondent's presumed willingness seriously to entertain and possibly accept an idea contrary to his own more central ones.

Candor-- which means the assumed forthrightness or self-honesty with which a response is made, which implies low denial and low defensiveness.

Evaluativeness--which refers to the tendency to make evaluative, good-bad, right-wrong judgments, with obviously pejorative implications.

Externality--which refers to the respondent's tendency to attribute success, failure, or control of his actions to forces over which he has little or no control, including such things as luck, other persons, social obstacles, etc.

Cynicism--which indicates an expression of nihilism, that nothing matters anyway, and that in general the world is a bunch of crap.

Optimism--which refers to an assumed feeling of well-being and in general that things either have or will turn out well for him.

Complexity--which has to do with the number of different themes expressed together with their integration, which, in essence, equals a kind of judged profundity or depth of thought.

Also attached is a billing for the scoring. If there is anything further we can do to assist you in your research, please do not hesitate to call on us. We would be pleased to receive a copy of whatever results are obtained from your study.

Sincerely,

O. J. Harvey
Professor

OJH/bd

# APPENDIX C

*Preparation of Curricular Plan*

*for Content Analysis*

Original Plan

The Greeks: Myth or Legend

Overview. (1) To show how the Greeks through their power of imagination (and philosophy) developed their culture based on their theories of life (religion, myths,, legends).

(2) To show any influences Greek culture has had through the ages and especially today.

(To learn more of the dignity of man and especially freedom, equality and justice.

Objectives. (1) Value

(a) Students learn to tolerate values of others.

(b) Students should be able to understand some of the effects of freedom, equality and justice on a society.

(2) Skill

(a) Locate, gather and organize information.

(b) Summarize and draw conclusions.

(c) Comparison to today's society.

(3) Knowledge

(a) A knowledge of the land and its people.

(b) A knowledge of the religion of the Greeks, their philosophies and culture.

(c) A knowledge of the development of Greek culture and its effect on today's world.

Learning Opportunities

Opener. The reading and study of Greek myths in reading class. Films and slides. Visit of a parent who had spent time in Greece.

Development

Small group and class discussions; research and reports--individuals and groups; written records--made together and in groups; role playing.

Evaluation

(1) What knowledge have the children developed in Greek culture?
(2) What effect has Greek culture had on our lives?
(3) Value type questions.

## Schedule of Preparation

1. Delete all enumeration except where it lends within-text meaning--group-of-three, for example.
2. Delete all definite and indefinite articles.
3. Delete all conjunctions except where found within a hyphenated content unit--group-of-students, for example.
4. Delete all preposions.
5. Substitute pronouns for noun referents--them becomes Greeks, for example.
6. Remove superfluous expression--should be able, some of the, who had, have them, based on their, through their, for example.
7. Hyphenate words strings which would not carry unit of meaning if separated--values-of-others, dignity-of-man, small-group, written-records, for example. Hyphenated units could not exceed 22 characters without reprogramming the computer.
8. Remove proper nouns unless they represent content directly associated with the curricular plan content--superintendent's report, Grandview School, for example.
9. Code certain words if multiple meaning is involved--record(n) if noun is indicated in text; record(v) if verb is indicated in text.
10. Eliminate all upper case letters.
11. Abbreviate where expedient in order to cut down word count.

Plan Prepared for Transfer to
Computer Cards

11001 greeks myth legend overview show-how greeks power-of-imagination
2 philosophy developed culture theories-of-life religion myths
3 legends show-influence greek-culture learn dignity-of-man
4 freedom equality justice objectives value students learn tolerate
5 values-of-others students understand effects-of-freedom equality
6 justice society skill locate-information gather-information
7 summarize draw-conclusions comparison today's-society knowledge
8 land people knowldge religion greeks philosophies culture
9 knowledge development greek-culture effect today's -world
10 learning opportunities opener reading study greek-myths reading-
11 class films slides visit parent spent-time greece development
12 small-group class-discussion research reports individuals
13 groups written-records together groups role-playing evaluation
14 what knowledge children developed greek-culture what effect
11015 greek-culture lives value-type-questions

# APPENDIX D

*University Courses and Other Relevant Experiences*

## University Courses and Other Relevant Experiences

### *University Courses Relevant to Curricular Decision Making*

Respondents reported each university course in terms of its title, calendar number, instructor (if known), and the year taken (Table 41). These data were collapsed into fourteen rank-ordered field according to the frequency with which courses within each field had been taken.

*Fields and frequencies.* The most frequently mentioned field was social studies methodology. Three rural teachers, three small-city teachers, and four large-city teachers had taken at least one course in this field for a total of 13 in the total sample. History ranked second in the fields which had assisted the teachers in the task of curricular decision making. One teacher in the small-city subgroup had taken two history courses while two teachers in the large-city subgroup had taken a total of seven. The total number of history courses taken by teachers in the total sample was nine. Courses in elementary reading methodology ranked third highest in frequency. Two rural teachers indicated that such courses had assisted them in curricular decision making. One small-city teacher and one large-city teacher had each taken four such courses. The frequency of helpful courses taken in the field of reading was seven for the total sample. Sociology ranked fourth. One teacher in the rural subgroup had taken five courses in the field of sociology and one large-city

Table 41

University Courses Which Have Assisted Teachers in the Task of Curricular Decision Making

| Rank | TYPE OF COURSE | NUMBER OF COURSES TAKEN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rural System | | | | | | | Total | Small City System | | | | | | | Total | Large City System | | | | | | | Total | Total |
| | | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | | |
| 1 | Social Studies Methodology | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | *2 | | | 4 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 3 | | 6 | 13 |
| 2 | History | | | | | | | | 0 | 1*1 | | | | | | | 2 | | 3 | | | | 4 | | 7 | 9 |
| 3 | Elementary Reading Methodology | | | | | 2 | | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | | | | | 3 | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 7 |
| 4 | Sociology | 5 | | | | | | | 5 | | | | | | | | 0 | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 6 |
| 5 | Educational Psychology | | | | | | | | 0 | | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | 2 | 4 |
| 6 | Elementary Physical Education Methodology | 2 | | | | 1 | | | 3 | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | | 0 | 3 |
| 7 | Elementary Language Methodology | | | | | | | | 0 | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| 7 | Library Service | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| 7 | Elementary Science Methodology | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| 7 | Elementary Music Methodology | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| 7 | Educational Foundations | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 7 | Elementary Mathematics Methodology | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| 7 | Audio-Visual Methodology | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| 7 | Communications Theory | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| | Totals | 7 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 16 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 16 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 18 | 50 |

*Taken in a university outside Alberta.

teacher had taken one course which had assisted in the task of curricular decision making. The fifth field was educational psychology. One small-city and one large-city teacher reported that they had each taken two courses in educational psychology which had been of assistance. Two rural teachers indicated that three courses in elementary physical education methodology had been of assistance to them in making curricular decisions. Eight fields of study ranked seventh with one teacher reporting one useful course in each of the following: elementary langugage methodology, library service, elementary science and music methodology, educational foundations, elementary mathematics, and audio visual methodologies, and communications theory.

Rural teachers reported 16 courses, small-city teachers reported 16 courses, and large-city teachers reported 18 courses which had been of particular assistance to them when planning social studies units. With the exception of three courses which were taken in another province, all courses had been taken in universities located in Alberta.

*Other experiences relevant to curricular decision making.* These data were reported by each teacher in terms of the type of experience, where the experience took place, the personnel involved, the course of the personnel, the year, and attendance. Because of the varying nature of the experiences reported by the teachers in each subgroup of the sample, the analysis has been presented in three sections: the rural response, the small-city response, and the large-city response.

*Rural response.* Teachers cited 11 specific experiences which they perceived to be relevant to curricular decision making (Table 42). Six of the activities were offered outside the system. Six of the experiences were conducted by personnel representing the Department of Education, two of the experiences were offered under the auspices of a provincial teachers' association specialists' council, and three activities were sponsored by local teachers. All experiences had occurred between 1968 and 1972 with six of the eleven activities occurring in 1972. A teachers' institute in 1972 was attended by all seven teachers. This was full-day sessions offered in lieu of a regular teaching day. Two teachers had attended a social studies workshop in 1970 where attendance was voluntary. Each of the remaining nine experiences was voluntarily attended by one teacher. These activities were: two social studies workshops, a professional day, two social studies conferences, a seminar addressed to testing, a seminar devoted to theplanning of a unit, an in-service seminar, and a unit evaluation by a social studies consultant. A total of 18 in-service experiences were attended voluntarily by the teachers in the rural sub-group of the sample.

*Small-city response.* Seven specific experiences were cited by teachers (Table 43). All represented in-service activities. Three were associated with a teachers' convention. Two were experiences offered under the auspices of a provincial teachers' association specialists' council; the other activities were presented by personnel from a university, a large-city central office staff, the regional

Table 42

Summary of Experiences Other Than University Courses Which Have Assisted Teachers in the Task of Curricular Decision Making
(Rural School Division)
N = 7

| | Description of Experience | Location | Personnel | Source | Year | Teacher Attendance | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | Total |
| 1 | Social Studies Workshop | Three Hills | Erickson | Department of Education | 1968 | | | | x | | | | 1 |
| 2 | Social Studies Workshop | *Carbon | Ledgerwood | Department of Education | 1969 | | | | x | | | | 1 |
| 3 | Social Studies Workshop | Three Hills | Ledgerwood | Department of Education | 1970 | | | | x | | x | | 2 |
| 4 | Professional Day | *Calgary | A tour of various schools | | 1971 | | | | | | | x | 1 |
| 5 | Social Studies Conference | *Banff | Specialist Council | Alberta Teachers' Ass'n. | 1971 | | | x | | | | | 1 |
| 6 | Teachers' Institute | Three Hills | Erickson | Department of Education | 1972 | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | 7 |
| 7 | Pre-Test/ Post-Test Seminar | *Drumheller | Local Teachers | Drumheller Area | 1972 | x | | | | | | | 1 |
| 8 | Planning-a-Unit Seminar | *Drumheller | Local Teachers | Drumheller Area | 1972 | x | | | | | | | 1 |
| 9 | Social Studies In-Service | Three Hills | Erichson | Department of Education | 1972 | | x | | | | | | 1 |
| 10 | Social Studies Conference | *Edmonton | Specialist Council | Alberta Teachers' Ass'n. | 1972 | | | x | | | | | 1 |
| 11 | Evaluation by Regional Consultants | Three Hills | Kunst | Department of Education | 1972 | | | | | x | | | 1 |
| | | | | Experience Totals | | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 18 |

*Indicates an experience which was offered *outside* the system.

Table 43

Summary of Experiences Other Than University Courses Which Have Assisted Teachers in the Task of Curricular Decision Making
(Small City District)
N = 7

| | Description of Experience | Location | Personnel | Source | Year | Teacher Attendance | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | Total |
| 1 | Convention Workshop | Red Deer | Consultant | Alberta Teachers' Ass'n. | 1968 | | x | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | Convention Workshop | Red Deer | Consultant | University of Alberta | 1969 | | x | | | | | | 1 |
| 3 | Convention Workshop | Red Deer | Consultant | Alberta Teachers' Ass'n. | 1970 | | x | | | | | | 1 |
| 4 | Early Childhood Education Reading | *Edmonton | Central Office | Edmonton Public School District | 1970 | | | | | | x | | 1 |
| 5 | Social Studies Workshop | Red Deer | Central Office | Red Deer Public School District | 1970 | x | x | | | | | | 2 |
| 6 | Unit Planning Workshop | Red Deer | Schrieber | Regional Office | 1971 | | x | x | x | x | x | x | 6 |
| 7 | Individual Instruction | Red Deer | Halbert | Learning Assistance Centre | 1972 | x | | x | | | x | | 3 |
| | | | | Experience Totals | | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |

*Indicates an experience which was offered *outside* the system.

office consultant in social studies, the regional learning assistance center, and the small-city central office itself. The activities occurred between 1968 and 1972 with no concentration in any one year; one of the in-service activities was attended outside the local system. Six of the seven teachers in the small-city subgroup attended a workshop on unit planning. Three teachers had attended a seminar on individualized instruction and two teachers had attended a social studies workshop. One teacher had attended each of the other activities: three convention workshops and an early childhood education reading readiness workshop. A total of 15 in-service experiences had been attended by the teachers who felt that they had been assisted in the task of curricular decision making by participating in these activities. All teachers had attended at least one in-service experience.

*Large city response.* Eight specific experiences were cited by teachers in this category (Table 44). All were in-service activities which were offered by personnel within the system with the exception of one: a precision teaching seminar led by an expert from the United States. One experience was offered under the auspices of a provincial teachers' association specialists' council; the other seven were sponsored by the large-city office. The activities which occurred between 1970 and 1972 were voluntarily attended. Three of the seven teachers in the subgroup had not attended an in-service activity; each of the remaining five teachers had attended one of the following experiences:

Table 44

Summary of Experiences Other Than University Courses Which Have Assisted Teachers in the Task of Curricular Decision Making
(Large City District)
N = 7

| | Description of Experience | Location | Personnel | Source | Year | Teacher Attendance | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 20 | Total |
| 1 | Social Studies Workshop | Edmonton | Curricular Associates | Edmonton Public School District | 1970 | | | x | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | Micro Teaching Workshop | Edmonton | | Edmonton Public School District | 1970 | | | | | | x | | 1 |
| 3 | Social Studies Workshop | Edmonton | Curricular Associates | Edmonton Public School District | 1970 | | | x | | | | | 1 |
| 4 | Curriculum Seminar | Edmonton | Curricular Associates | Edmonton Public School District | 1971 | | x | | | | | | 1 |
| 5 | Convention Seminar | Edmonton | Stolee | Edmonton Public School District | 1971 | | x | | | | | | 1 |
| 6 | Precision Teaching Seminar | Edmonton | Deune | Oregon | 1971 | | | | x | | | | 1 |
| 7 | Communications Seminar | Edmonton | | Alberta Teachers' Ass'n. | 1971 | | | | | | x | | 1 |
| 8 | Contract Learning Seminar | Edmonton | | Edmonton Public School District | 1972 | | | | | | x | | 1 |
| | | | | Experience Totals | | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 8 |

social studies and micro-teaching workshops and seminars in curriculum, precision-teaching, communications, and contract learning. A total of eight in-service experiences were attended by the teachers in the large-city subgroup of the sample.